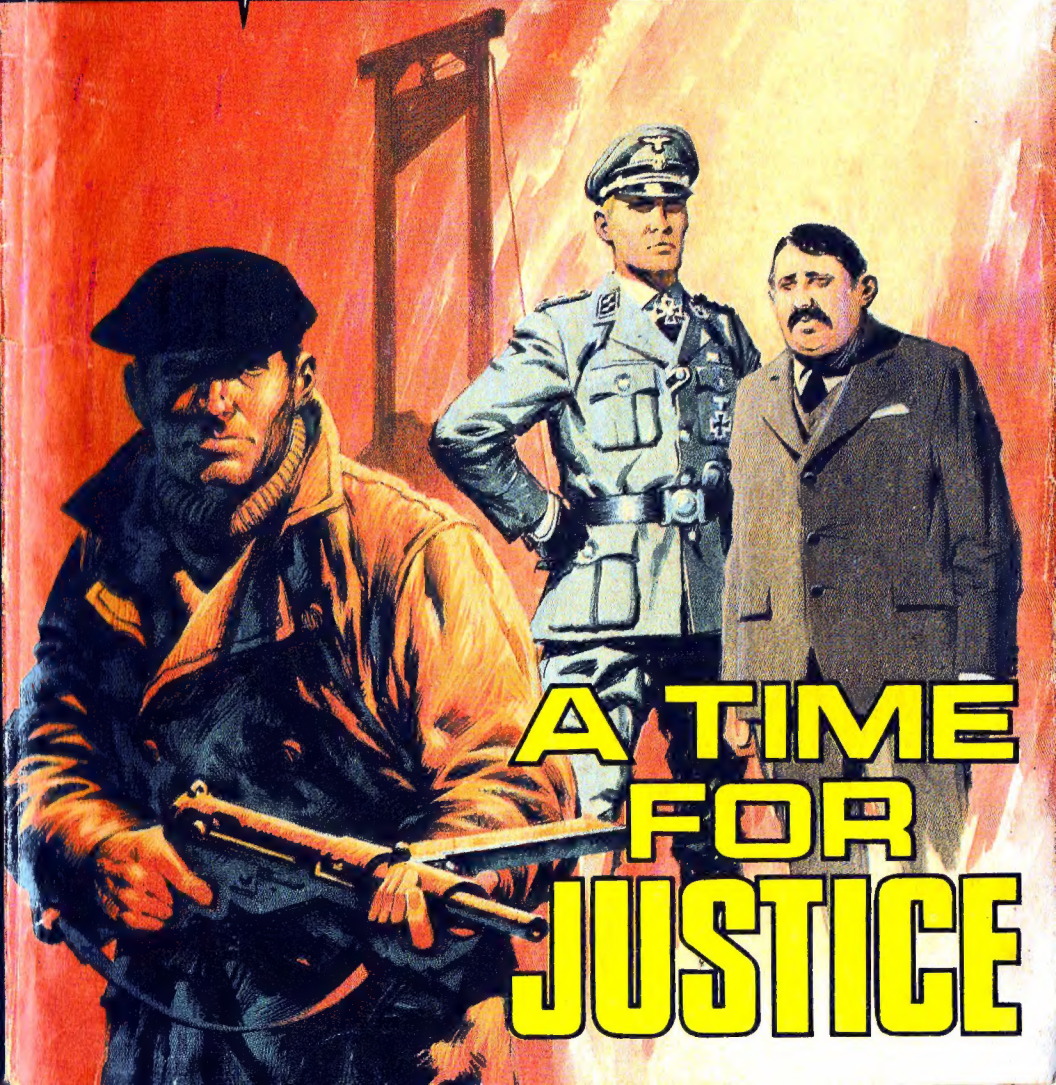
No. 1407

12p

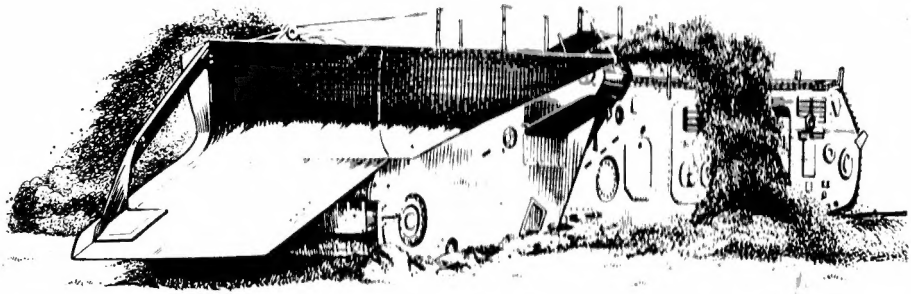
Commando

WAR STORIES IN PICTURES

13c



A TIME FOR JUSTICE

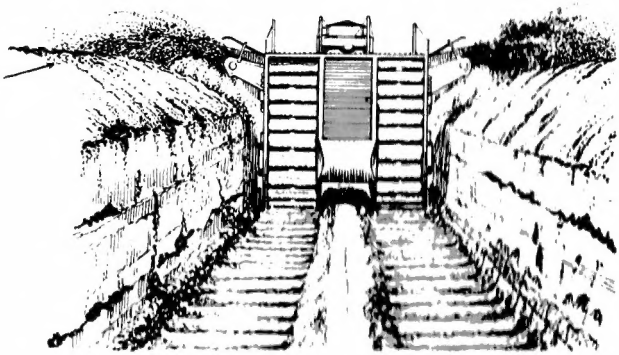


WEIRD WEAPONS of World War II

No. 10: Giant Trench-Digger

It was Winston Churchill himself who ordered these monsters to be built. To avoid huge losses in men and tanks while attacking strong fortifications like the Siegfried Line, the machines were to dig enormous trenches to take our troops under cover right up to the target. They had a blade in front like a snow-plough, with rotary cutters behind it. The soil was then taken by conveyor belts and thrown out at both sides. Moving at half a mile an hour they could cut a trench 1.5 metres deep and 2.3 metres wide. The earth piling up on each side brought the depth to 2.5 metres, which could give full protection to men and light tanks.

Earth thrown out at sides increases depth of trench.



A TIME FOR JUSTICE

AS A TRAINED SECRET AGENT AND SABOTEUR, BOB STANDON WAS USED TO DANGER AND THE UNEXPECTED. BUT AS HE PARACHUTED DOWN INTO NAZI-OCCUPIED FRANCE IN NINETEEN-FORTY-THREE, HE HAD NO IDEA THAT THIS WAS TO BE A VERY ODD MISSION INDEED . . . WITH A STRANGE LINK WITH FRANCE'S GORY PAST . . .

BOB LANDED SAFELY IN FRENCH COUNTRYSIDE. AND AFTER BURYING HIS PARACHUTE, HELMET AND SMOCK, HE WAS MET BY HIS CONTACT, A YOUNG MAN NAMED MARCEL RENARD, AND TAKEN TO A SAFE HIDEOUT.

YOU SPEAK VERY GOOD FRENCH, MONSIEUR. WERE YOU BORN OVER HERE?

NO, BUT MY MOTHER WAS. SHE TAUGHT ME TO BE PROUD OF MY FRENCH BLOOD.

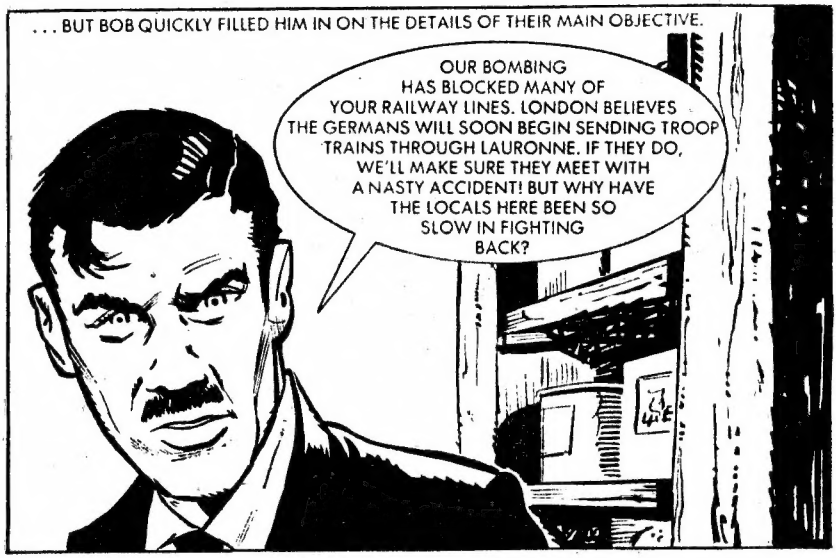
BOB WENT ON TO EXPLAIN THAT WHEN THE CHANCE HAD COME FOR HIM TO HELP THE FRENCH, HE HAD BEEN MORE THAN WILLING.

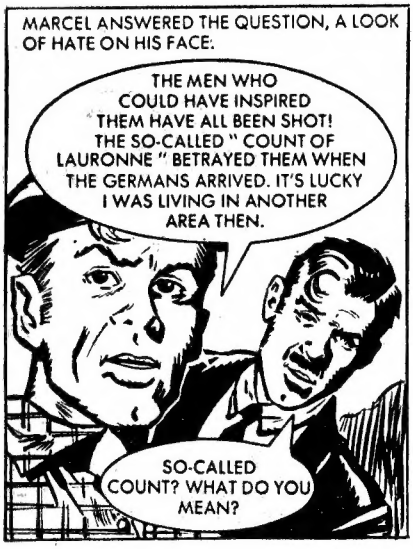
MARCEL LISTENED GRIMLY, BEFORE SPEAKING TO BOB.

WELL, I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'LL THINK OF US NOW! I'M ASHAMED TO SAY THERE'S NO RESISTANCE MOVEMENT HERE IN LAURONNE.

THAT'S PARTLY WHY I'M HERE. I'M GOING TO HELP YOU GIVE THE NAZIS SOME UNPLEASANT SHOCKS.

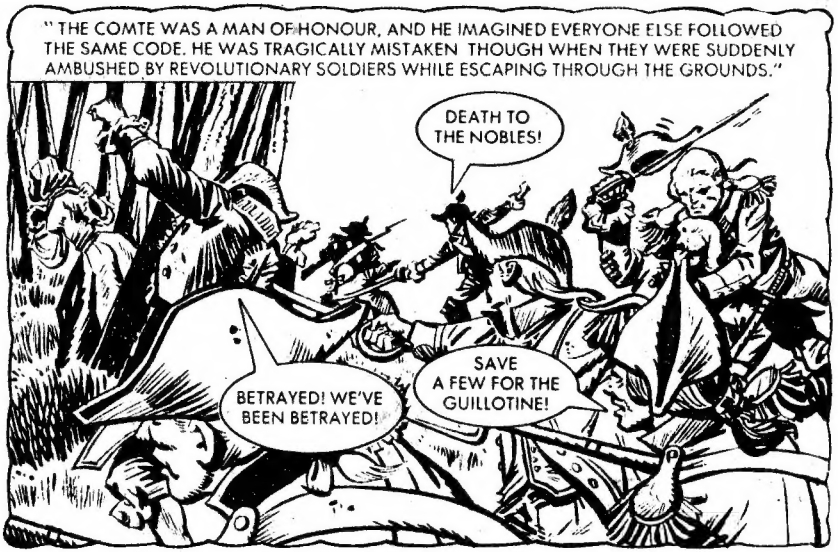
MARCEL WAS SLIGHTLY PUZZLED FOR A MOMENT . . .


. . . BUT BOB QUICKLY FILLED HIM IN ON THE DETAILS OF THEIR MAIN OBJECTIVE.
OUR BOMBING HAS BLOCKED MANY OF YOUR RAILWAY LINES. LONDON BELIEVES THE GERMANS WILL SOON BEGIN SENDING TROOP TRAINS THROUGH LAURONNE. IF THEY DO, WE'LL MAKE SURE THEY MEET WITH A NASTY ACCIDENT! BUT WHY HAVE THE LOCALS HERE BEEN SO SLOW IN FIGHTING BACK?

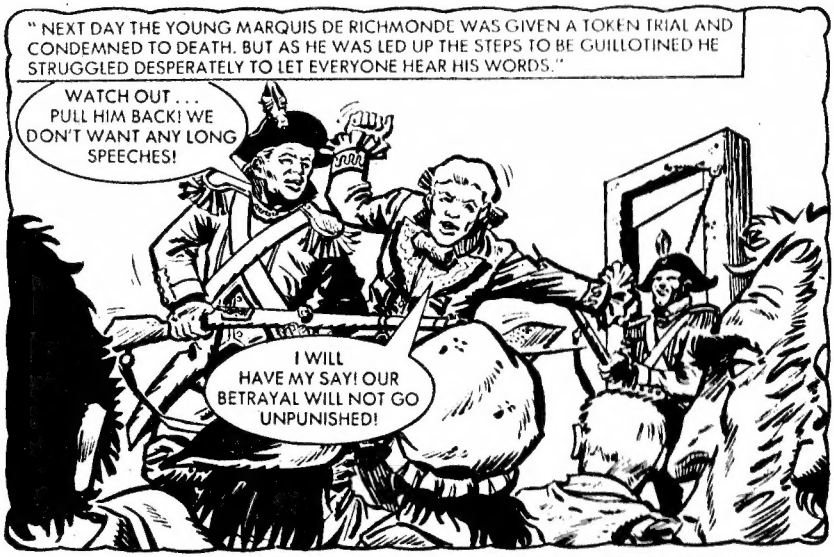

MARCEL ANSWERED THE QUESTION, A LOOK OF HATE ON HIS FACE:
THE MEN WHO COULD HAVE INSPIRED THEM HAVE ALL BEEN SHOT! THE SO-CALLED " COUNT OF LAURONNE " BETRAYED THEM WHEN THE GERMANS ARRIVED. IT'S LUCKY I WAS LIVING IN ANOTHER AREA THEN.
SO-CALLED COUNT? WHAT DO YOU MEAN?

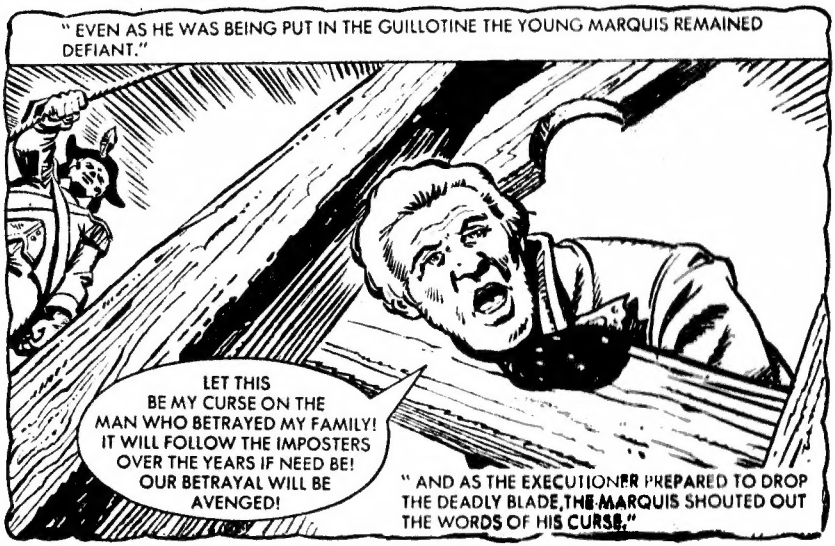
THE FRENCHMAN CONTINUED—
HE'S A FRAUD — BUT HE USES THE TITLE AND LIVES IN THE CHATEAU. PERHAPS I SHOULD TELL YOU THE FULL STORY . . .

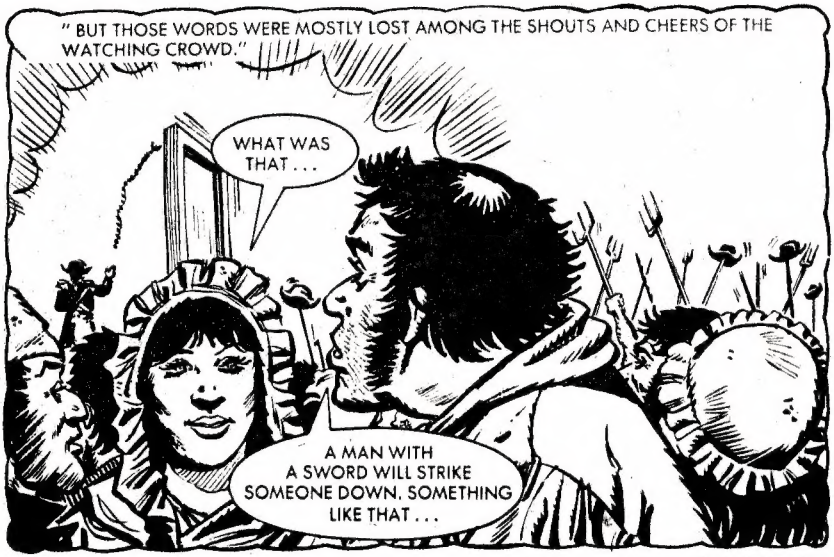
" . . . IT WAS DURING THE REVOLUTION IN THE LATE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY. THE ANCESTOR OF THE PRESENT COMTE, GASTON DUVAL, HAD ALWAYS BEEN JEALOUS OF THE REAL COMTE DE LAURONNE'S POWER AND WEALTH. AND WHEN ALL ARISTOCRATS WERE IN DANGER OF LOSING THEIR LIVES, DUVAL SAW A WAY OF GAINING THE RICHES HE COVETED."
YOUR FAMILY'S SAFETY IN EXCHANGE FOR YOUR TITLE AND YOUR CHATEAU. A FAIR BARGAIN, I'D SAY!
MY FAMILY MEANS MORE TO ME THAN MY OLD HOME. IF THIS IS THE PRICE YOU ASK, I WILL HAVE TO PAY IT.
" THE COMTE'S FAMILY WERE AGAINST THE BARGAIN. HIS SON IN LAW, THE YOUNG MARQUIS DE RICHMONDE, TRIED HARD TO GET THE OLD MAN TO CHANGE HIS MIND, BUT THE COMTE WAS DETERMINED TO SAVE THEIR LIVES."
I STILL SAY YOU SHOULD HAVE REFUSED THAT GREASY CRIMINAL! YOU'VE BEEN GOOD TO THE PEOPLE OF LAURONNE. THEY WOULDN'T HARM YOU.
WE WILL BE SAFE FROM THE GUILLOTINE IN ENGLAND. THAT IS ALL THAT MATTERS.
" DUVAL HAD PROMISED THE COMTE AND HIS FAMILY A SAFE AND TROUBLE FREE PASSAGE ACROSS THE CHANNEL INTO ENGLAND."

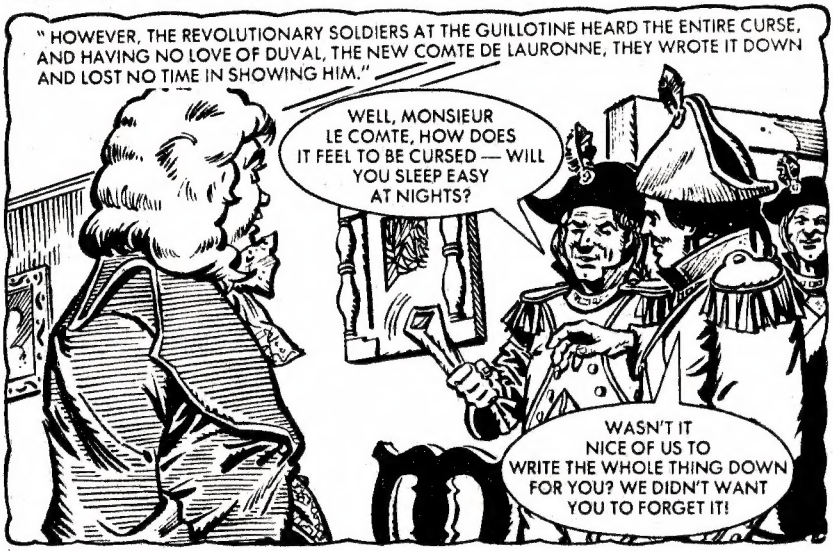

" THE COMTE WAS A MAN OF HONOUR, AND HE IMAGINED EVERYONE ELSE FOLLOWED THE SAME CODE. HE WAS TRAGICALLY MISTAKEN THOUGH WHEN THEY WERE SUDDENLY AMBUSHED BY REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIERS WHILE ESCAPING THROUGH THE GROUNDS."
DEATH TO THE NOBLES!
BETRAYED! WE'VE BEEN BETRAYED!
SAVE A FEW FOR THE GUILLOTINE!

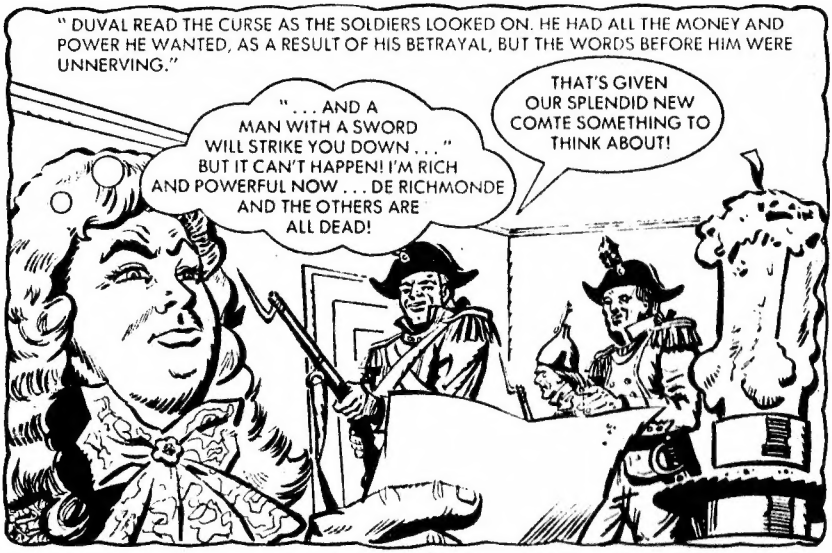
" MOST OF THE FAMILY WERE MERCILESSLY CUT DOWN—THE REST WERE TAKEN AWAY TO BE EXECUTED. AND DUVAL, THE TRAITOR HIMSELF, WATCHED FROM THE TREES."
IF I'D LET THEM ESCAPE THAT YOUNG DE RICHMONDE WOULD HAVE RETURNED ONE DAY TO CLAIM HIS INHERITANCE. THIS WAY NONE OF THEM WILL EVER TROUBLE ME AGAIN.

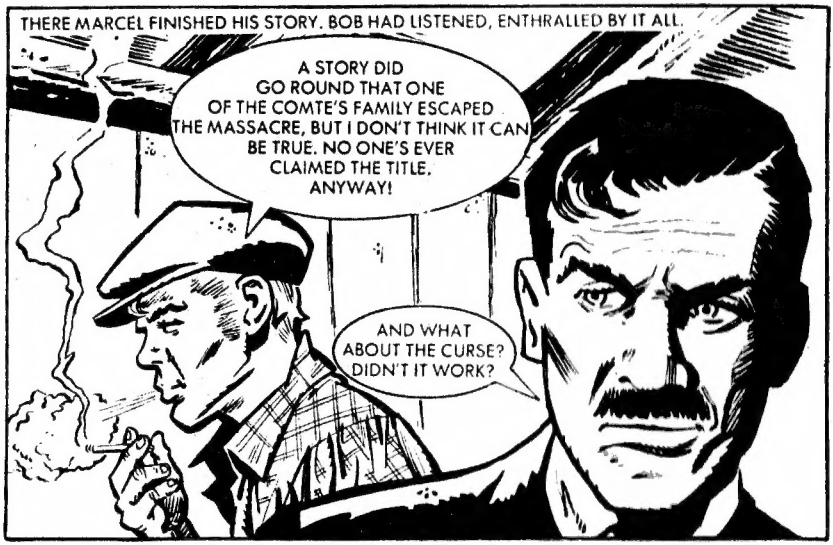

" NEXT DAY THE YOUNG MARQUIS DE RICHMONDE WAS GIVEN A TOKEN TRIAL AND CONDEMNED TO DEATH. BUT AS HE WAS LED UP THE STEPS TO BE GUILLOTINED HE STRUGGLED DESPERATELY TO LET EVERYONE HEAR HIS WORDS."
WATCH OUT . . . PULL HIM BACK! WE DON'T WANT ANY LONG SPEECHES!
I WILL HAVE MY SAY! OUR BETRAYAL WILL NOT GO UNPUNISHED!


" EVEN AS HE WAS BEING PUT IN THE GUILLOTINE THE YOUNG MARQUIS REMAINED DEFIANT."
LET THIS BE MY CURSE ON THE MAN WHO BETRAYED MY FAMILY! IT WILL FOLLOW THE IMPOSTERS OVER THE YEARS IF NEED BE! OUR BETRAYAL WILL BE AVENGED!
" AND AS THE EXECUTIONER PREPARED TO DROP THE DEADLY BLADE, THE MARQUIS SHOUTED OUT THE WORDS OF HIS CURSE."


" BUT THOSE WORDS WERE MOSTLY LOST AMONG THE SHOUTS AND CHEERS OF THE WATCHING CROWD."
WHAT WAS THAT . . .
A MAN WITH A SWORD WILL STRIKE SOMEONE DOWN. SOMETHING LIKE THAT . . .


" HOWEVER, THE REVOLUTIONARY SOLDIERS AT THE GUILLOTINE HEARD THE ENTIRE CURSE, AND HAVING NO LOVE OF DUVAL, THE NEW COMTE DE LAURONNE, THEY WROTE IT DOWN AND LOST NO TIME IN SHOWING HIM."
WELL, MONSIEUR LE COMTE, HOW DOES IT FEEL TO BE CURSED — WILL YOU SLEEP EASY AT NIGHTS?
WASN'T IT NICE OF US TO WRITE THE WHOLE THING DOWN FOR YOU? WE DIDN'T WANT YOU TO FORGET IT!


" DUVAL READ THE CURSE AS THE SOLDIERS LOOKED ON. HE HAD ALL THE MONEY AND POWER HE WANTED, AS A RESULT OF HIS BETRAYAL, BUT THE WORDS BEFORE HIM WERE UNNERVING."
" . . . AND A MAN WITH A SWORD WILL STRIKE YOU DOWN . . . " BUT IT CAN'T HAPPEN! I'M RICH AND POWERFUL NOW . . . DE RICHMONDE AND THE OTHERS ARE ALL DEAD!
THAT'S GIVEN OUR SPLENDID NEW COMTE SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT!


THERE MARCEL FINISHED HIS STORY. BOB HAD LISTENED, ENTHRALLED BY IT ALL.
A STORY DID GO ROUND THAT ONE OF THE COMTE'S FAMILY ESCAPED THE MASSACRE, BUT I DON'T THINK IT CAN BE TRUE. NO ONE'S EVER CLAIMED THE TITLE. ANYWAY!
AND WHAT ABOUT THE CURSE? DIDN'T IT WORK?

MARCEL LAUGHED—
OF COURSE NOT! A PITY, REALLY . . . THE DUVALS HAVE NEVER BEEN GOOD FOR THIS AREA. AND OF COURSE THE PRESENT " COMTE " IS A COLLABORATOR AND A TRAITOR!
IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT MARCEL DID NOT BELIEVE IN CURSES. NEITHER DID BOB—BUT HE WAS STILL CURIOUS ENOUGH TO WANT TO KNOW MORE.
BUT WHAT EXACTLY WAS THIS CURSE? HOW WAS IT SUPPOSED TO WORK?
I'VE NO IDEA! I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT IT SAID! SOME OF THE OTHER LOCALS MIGHT BE ABLE TO TELL YOU, IF YOU'RE REALLY INTERESTED . . .
THAT NIGHT AS BOB WENT TO SLEEP THE TALE MUST HAVE STILL BEEN ON HIS MIND, FOR HE HAD A STRANGE DREAM.
PUSHING . . . THEY'RE PUSHING ME FORWARD. I CAN'T ESCAPE . . . BUT WHERE AM I GOING?
HE FOUGHT AND STRUGGLED BUT THE HOWLING MOB ALL AROUND HIM CLOSED IN RELENTLESSLY. AND ONE DETAIL WHICH STUCK IN HIS MIND WAS THE FACT THAT THEY WERE ALL DRESSED IN EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY CLOTHING.

BOB SUDDENLY WOKE WITH A START—HE WAS SWEATING, SHAKEN BY THE WILD NIGHTMARE.

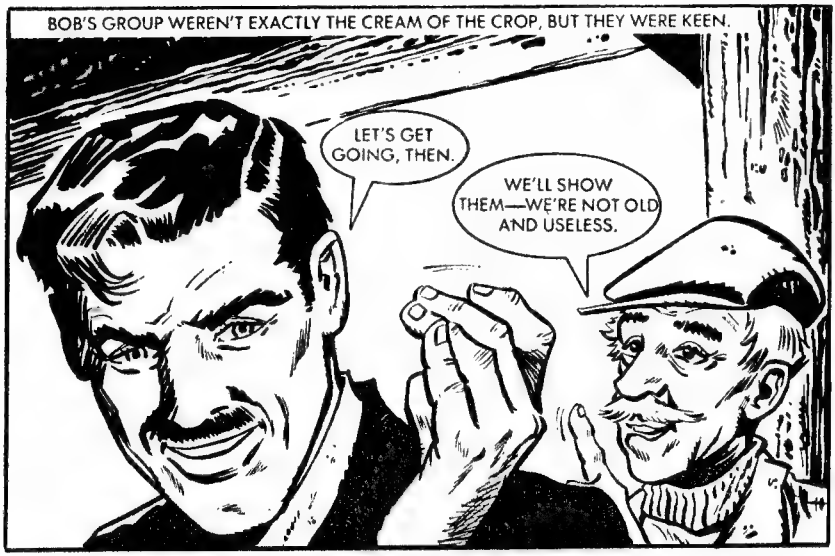
I WAS BACK IN REVOLUTIONARY FRANCE . . . AND IT ALL SEEMED SO REAL! THAT'S WHAT COMES OF LISTENING TO MARCEL'S STORIES!

HE GOT OUT OF BED AND DRESSED, BUT DECIDED NOT TO TELL MARCEL ABOUT HIS DREAM AS THEY HAD MORE IMPORTANT THINGS TO THINK ABOUT.

BOB HAD A LOT TO DO, BUT HIS FIRST PRIORITY WAS TO GET RESISTANCE ACTIVITIES MOVING, AND THAT DAY HE AND MARCEL ORGANISED A MEETING WITH SOME LOCAL WOULD-BE FIGHTERS TO DISCUSS PLANS FOR DISRUPTING GERMAN MOVEMENTS.

WE KNOW THAT THE GERMANS ARE GOING TO DRIVE SOME LORRIES ALONG HERE. THEY NEED THEM FOR THE RUSSIAN FRONT. WE'RE GOING TO MAKE SURE THEY DON'T GET THERE!

THEY WON'T BE EXPECTING TROUBLE IN THIS AREA. WE'VE BEEN QUIET FOR A LONG TIME.


BOB'S GROUP WEREN'T EXACTLY THE CREAM OF THE CROP, BUT THEY WERE KEEN.
LET'S GET GOING, THEN.
WE'LL SHOW THEM—WE'RE NOT OLD AND USELESS.

A FEW HOURS LATER, AFTER NIGHTFALL, THE GERMAN TRUCKS BOB WAS PLANNING TO AMBUSH WERE HEADING ALONG A ROUGH FOREST ROAD.
WE'D BETTER KEEP AN EYE OPEN FOR TROUBLE, HERR HAUPTMANN.
THERE'S NO NEED.
WH-79101
BUT THE GERMAN OFFICER HAD SPOKEN TOO SOON . . .

. . . FOR BOB AND HIS MEN WERE LYING IN WAIT AT THE TOP OF A STEEP BANK OVERLOOKING THE ROAD. THEY WERE ALL ARMED WITH GRENADES WHICH BOB HAD BROUGHT WITH HIM FROM ENGLAND.
HERE GOES! LET'S HOPE IT'S A DIRECT HIT!

BOB'S GRENADE EXPLODED JUST AS HE HAD PLANNED, UNDERNEATH THE FRONT WHEEL OF THE END TRUCK.
HIMMEL!

THE OFFICER IN THE LEADING TRUCK HEARD THE EXPLOSION AND QUICKLY ORDERED A HALT.
STOP! SOMETHING'S GONE WRONG BACK THERE.

THE GERMANS REALISED THEY WERE BEING AMBUSHED BUT WERE TOO LATE TO PREVENT ANOTHER LOBBED GRENADE EXPLODING ON THE LEADING TRUCK, CREATING MORE HAVOC.

THEY CAN'T TURN BACK, THE BURNING LORRY WILL STOP THEM. THEY'RE TRAPPED!

OK. TAKE CARE OF THE OTHERS.

THE OTHER FRENCHMEN WERE JUST AS ACCURATE WITH THEIR THROWS AND SOON GERMAN TROOPS SPILLED OUT FROM ALL FOUR BURNING VEHICLES.

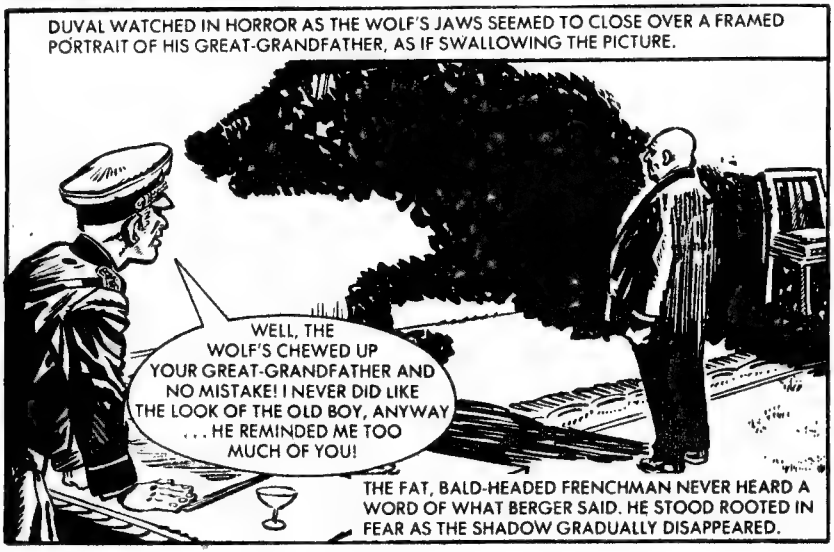
SCHNELL! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

VERDAMMT! WHAT HAPPENED?

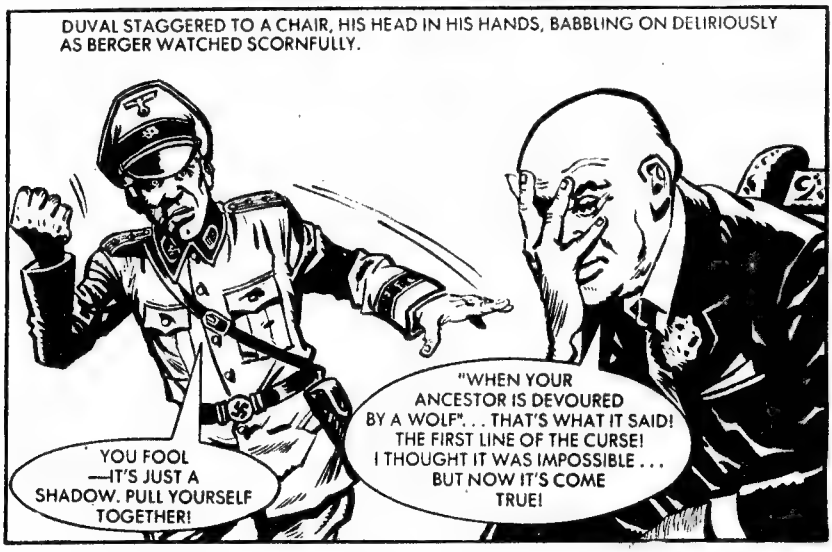
LOOKING ON IN HORROR AS HIS CONVOY OF TRUCKS LAY IN FLAMES, THE GERMAN OFFICER KNEW HE WOULD SUFFER FOR THIS NIGHT'S WORK.

FOR BOB IT WAS A SUCCESSFUL OPERATION, BUT IT WAS TO HAVE AN UNFORESEEN EFFECT. IN THE CHATEAU DE LAURONNE BERTRAND DUVAL, GREAT-GRANDSON OF THE EVIL GASTON, ENTERTAINED THE LOCAL S.S. OFFICER, ERICH BERGER. THOUGH THE FIRE FROM THE BURNING TRUCKS WAS VISIBLE FROM THE WINDOWS, THE " COMTE " WAS NOT UNDULY WORRIED.

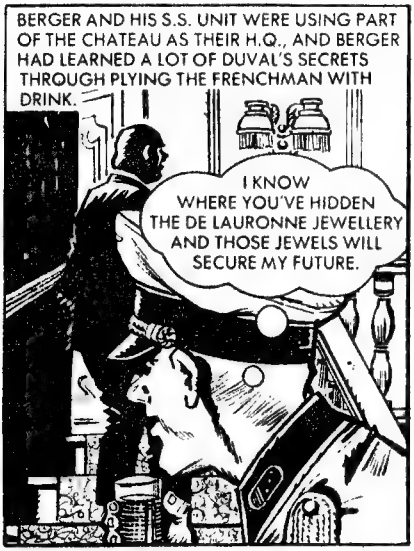
BUT THEN BERGER NOTICED SOMETHING VERY STRANGE. THE FIRE FROM THE BLAZING TRUCKS CAST A GIANT SHADOW ACROSS THE CHATEAU IN THE VAGUE SHAPE OF A WOLF'S HEAD.
LOOK AT THAT! IT LOOKS JUST LIKE A WOLF'S HEAD . . .
A WOLF!


DUVAL WATCHED IN HORROR AS THE WOLF'S JAWS SEEMED TO CLOSE OVER A FRAMED PORTRAIT OF HIS GREAT-GRANDFATHER, AS IF SWALLOWING THE PICTURE.
WELL, THE WOLF'S CHEWED UP YOUR GREAT-GRANDFATHER AND NO MISTAKE! I NEVER DID LIKE THE LOOK OF THE OLD BOY, ANYWAY . . . HE REMINDED ME TOO MUCH OF YOU!
THE FAT, BALD-HEADED FRENCHMAN NEVER HEARD A WORD OF WHAT BERGER SAID. HE STOOD ROOTED IN FEAR AS THE SHADOW GRADUALLY DISAPPEARED.

BERGER DESPISED DUVAL AND MADE NO SECRET OF IT — BUT HE WASN'T PREPARED FOR THE FRENCHMAN'S REACTION.
WOLF . . . EATEN BY A WOLF! IT'S COME TRUE! THE CURSE . . . IT'S COME TRUE!

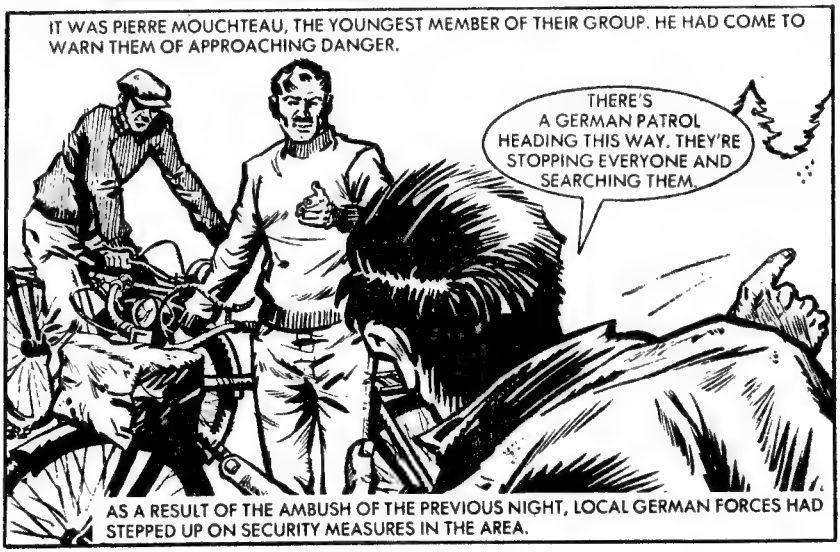

DUVAL STAGGERED TO A CHAIR, HIS HEAD IN HIS HANDS, BABBLING ON DELIRIOUSLY AS BERGER WATCHED SCORNFULLY.
YOU FOOL —IT'S JUST A SHADOW. PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER!
"WHEN YOUR ANCESTOR IS DEVOURED BY A WOLF". . . THAT'S WHAT IT SAID! THE FIRST LINE OF THE CURSE! I THOUGHT IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE . . . BUT NOW IT'S COME TRUE!

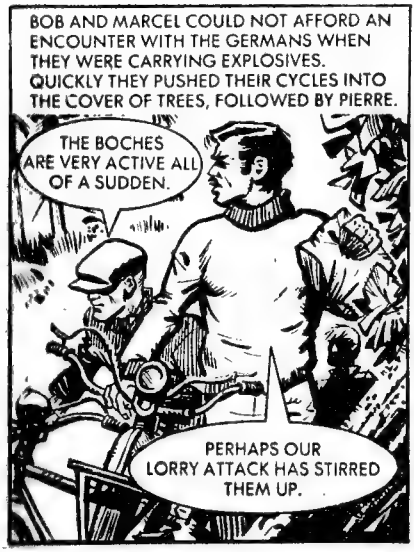
BERGER WATCHED UNSYMPATHETICALLY AS DUVAL TRIED TO POUR HIMSELF A DRINK WITH SHAKING HANDS.
YOU DRINK TOO MUCH, YOU SUPERSTITIOUS PEASANT! YOU WON'T LAST OUT THE WAR . . . AND IF THE DRINK DOESN'T FINISH YOU, I WILL!
THE S.S. OFFICER HAD ALREADY MADE HIS PLANS FOR THE FUTURE — WHATEVER THE OUTCOME OF THE WAR.


BERGER AND HIS S.S. UNIT WERE USING PART OF THE CHATEAU AS THEIR H.Q., AND BERGER HAD LEARNED A LOT OF DUVAL'S SECRETS THROUGH PLYING THE FRENCHMAN WITH DRINK.
I KNOW WHERE YOU'VE HIDDEN THE DE LAURONNE JEWELLERY AND THOSE JEWELS WILL SECURE MY FUTURE.

MEANWHILE IN THEIR HIDEOUT, BOB AND MARCEL HAD RECEIVED AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM LONDON CONCERNING THEIR BIG OPERATION.
THAT TROOP TRAIN WILL BE COMING THROUGH THIS AREA SOON TAKING SOLDIERS INTENDED FOR THE RUSSIAN FRONT. WE'VE GOT TO PUT IT OUT OF ACTION!
YES, AND LONDON SAYS THEY HAVE DROPPED EXPLOSIVES AND WEAPONS TO THE RESISTANCE GROUP OF CHERBONNE FOR THE JOB. WE CAN SOON COLLECT THAT.

SO THE NEXT DAY BOB AND MARCEL HEADED FOR THE NEARBY TOWN OF CHERBONNE TO COLLECT THEIR EXPLOSIVES. BUT ON THEIR WAY BACK TO LAURONNE THEY SPOTTED A FIGURE RUNNING TOWARDS THEM.
LOOK . . . THERE'S PIERRE! HE LOOKS AS IF HE'S ALL SET TO BREAK A SPEED RECORD!
SOMETHING MUST HAVE GONE WRONG . . .


IT WAS PIERRE MOUCHTEAU, THE YOUNGEST MEMBER OF THEIR GROUP. HE HAD COME TO WARN THEM OF APPROACHING DANGER.
THERE'S A GERMAN PATROL HEADING THIS WAY. THEY'RE STOPPING EVERYONE AND SEARCHING THEM.
AS A RESULT OF THE AMBUSH OF THE PREVIOUS NIGHT, LOCAL GERMAN FORCES HAD STEPPED UP ON SECURITY MEASURES IN THE AREA.


BOB AND MARCEL COULD NOT AFFORD AN ENCOUNTER WITH THE GERMANS WHEN THEY WERE CARRYING EXPLOSIVES. QUICKLY THEY PUSHED THEIR CYCLES INTO THE COVER OF TREES, FOLLOWED BY PIERRE.
THE BOCHES ARE VERY ACTIVE ALL OF A SUDDEN.
PERHAPS OUR LORRY ATTACK HAS STIRRED THEM UP.

LEAVING THEIR BIKES HIDDEN, THE THREE SET OFF WITH THEIR DYNAMITE. BUT IT WAS TOO RISKY TO RETURN TO LAURONNE.
WE'RE FOR THE HIGH JUMP IF THEY CATCH US WITH THIS DYNAMITE. WE MUST HIDE IT.
I KNOW A PLACE. COME ON.

PIERRE LED THEM TO A DISUSED RAILWAY TUNNEL NOT FAR AWAY.
THIS LINE'S BEEN CLOSED SINCE THE LAST WAR! THE DYNAMITE'LL BE SAFE IN THERE.
WE'LL COME BACK FOR IT LATER, WHEN THE COAST'S CLEAR AGAIN.
THEY THEN SET OFF BACK TOWARDS THE MAIN ROAD TO FETCH THE TWO BICYCLES.

BUT THEY HADN'T GONE A HUNDRED YARDS WHEN A GERMAN PATROL SUDDENLY APPEARED ON THE SCENE. LUCKILY BOB AND MARCEL WERE SOME WAY BEHIND PIERRE AND MANAGED TO SLIP UNNOTICED INTO COVER.
ANOTHER JERRY PATROL . . . AND THEY'VE SPOTTED PIERRE!
WE MUST STAY HIDDEN. HE WILL OUTRUN THEM.
THE GERMANS WERE ALMOST AS SURPRISED AT BUMPING INTO PIERRE AS HE WAS AT BUMPING INTO THEM AND IT TOOK THEM A WHILE TO GATHER THEIR WITS.

THE YOUNG FRENCHMAN RACED OFF ACROSS OPEN COUNTRY, WITH THE GERMANS LUMBERING ALONG IN PURSUIT. BOB AND MARCEL WATCHED TENSELY FROM COVER.
I HOPE HE MAKES IT . . .
HE'S GOT A START ON THEM, ANYWAY.
HALT! HALT!
INDEED IT LOOKED AS IF PIERRE WOULD GET AWAY . . .

. . . UNTIL HE TRIPPED AND FELL OVER AN OLD TREE TRUNK. HIS GERMAN PURSUERS CLOSED IN TO CAPTURE HIM.
AT LEAST THE BOCHES HAVEN'T SEEN BOB AND MARCEL! THEY'LL STILL BE ABLE TO BLOW UP THAT TROOP TRAIN . . . AAHH!
NOW WE HAVE HIM!

PIERRE WAS TAKEN TO THE CHATEAU DE LAURONNE, WHERE HAUPTSTURMFUHRER BERGER HAD HIS HEADQUARTERS, AND WAS WAITING TO INTERROGATE HIM.
I WASN'T DOING ANYTHING WRONG. I DIDN'T WANT TROUBLE . . . THAT'S WHY I RAN!
DON'T PLAY THE INNOCENT WITH ME! YOU'LL SOON BE SINGING A DIFFERENT TUNE.

BERGER WAS A RUTHLESS MAN, WELL TRAINED IN BRUTAL METHODS. EVEN THOUGH HE HAD NO EVIDENCE THAT PIERRE WAS IN THE RESISTANCE, THE YOUNG FRENCHMAN STILL RECEIVED THE FULL TREATMENT.
RIGHT . . . THAT'S SOFTENED HIM UP A BIT. NOW BRING ME THAT SYRINGE. A DOSE OF OUR NEW " TRUTH DRUG " WILL SOON GET HIM TALKING . . .
TRUTH DRUG? IF THEY USE DRUGS I MIGHT NOT BE ABLE TO RESIST . . . I MIGHT BETRAY THE GROUP.

PIERRE THOUGHT QUICKLY — THERE WAS STILL A CHANCE TO FOOL BERGER. HE PRETENDED TO CRACK AND GAVE THE GERMAN THE INFORMATION HE WANTED.
. . . NO . . . NO . . . DON'T HURT ME ANY MORE . . . I WAS HIDING DYNAMITE . . . I WAS GOING TO TRY AND CONTACT THE RESISTANCE AND SELL IT TO THEM . . . A MAN HAS TO LIVE, EVEN IN WARTIME . . .

BERGER GRINNED TRIUMPHANTLY, THINKING PIERRE HAD TOLD HIM EVERYTHING.
I KNEW YOU'D SEE SENSE! YOU FRENCH ARE ALL ALIKE —AFRAID FOR YOUR SKINS!
AT LEAST I'VE SAVED THE GROUP . . . AND BOB'LL GET SOME MORE DYNAMITE. HE'LL STILL BE ABLE TO BLOW UP THE TROOP TRAIN . . .
PIERRE HAD ACTED BRAVELY AND UNSELFISHLY, PUTTING HIS OWN LIFE IN DANGER TO SAVE BOB AND THE OTHERS.

THE GERMANS NOW KNEW WHERE TO FIND THE DYNAMITE, AND THE ARMY WERE GIVEN THE JOB OF FETCHING IT. IT WAS A LONG CLIMB TO THE TUNNEL BUT EVENTUALLY THEY REACHED IT.
TRUST THE S.S. TO GIVE US THE HARD WORK! WELL, I'M NOT SENDING ANYONE IN THERE. IT MIGHT BE BOOBY-TRAPPED. I'M NOT RISKING MY MEN TO PLEASE BERGER.
THE HAUPTMANN ORDERED ONE OF HIS MEN TO TOSS IN A GRENADE WHILE HE AND THE OTHERS RAN FOR COVER.

FIVE SECONDS LATER, WITH EVERYONE SAFELY BEHIND COVER, THE GRENADE DETONATED THE HIDDEN DYNAMITE AND THE RESULTS WERE SPECTACULAR.
THERE WAS CERTAINLY SOME EXPLOSIVE IN THERE! THEY'LL HEAR THAT BANG FOR MILES AROUND!

THE EXPLOSION HAD BEEN HEARD IN THE TOWN OF LAURONNE BY BOB AND MARCEL. THEY GUESSED WHAT HAD HAPPENED—
THE BOCHES HAVEN'T COME LOOKING FOR US . . . I THINK PIERRE MUST HAVE FOOLED THEM THAT HE WAS WORKING ON HIS OWN.
GOOD FOR HIM. HE'S A BRAVE MAN. WE OWE IT TO HIM TO GET MORE DYNAMITE AND BLOW UP THAT TRAIN NOW!
AND SO THEY PLANNED TO GET SOME MORE EXPLOSIVES.

THAT DAY, AT HIS CHATEAU HEADQUARTERS, BERGER READ THE OFFICER'S REPORT ON FINDING THE DYNAMITE. AND IT SEEMED THAT THE GRENADE HAD DONE SOME UNEXPECTED DAMAGE.

IT LOOKS AS IF YOU'VE LOST A LOCAL LANDMARK. THE ARMY MADE SUCH A GOOD JOB OF BLOWING UP THAT RAILWAY TUNNEL THEY'VE DESTROYED THOSE TWO STONES ON THE HILL ABOVE IT AS WELL! DIDN'T YOU SAY THEY WERE CALLED " THE BROTHERS "?

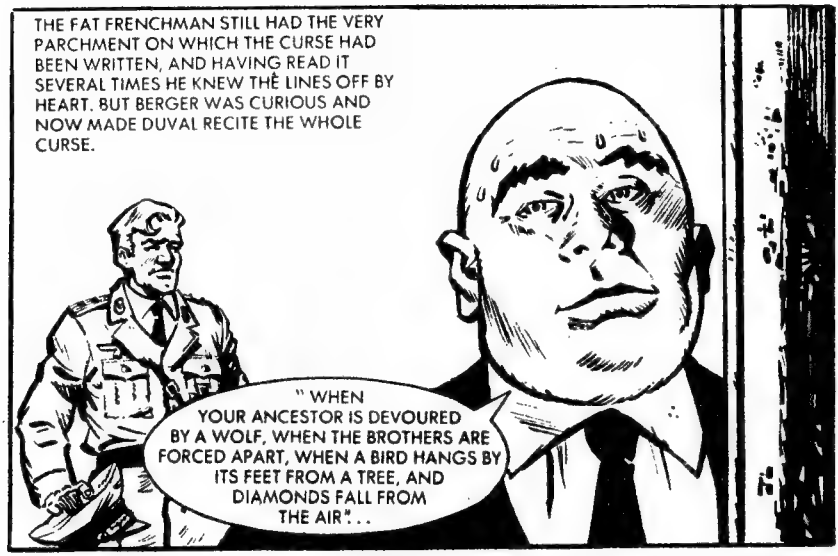
THE S.S. OFFICER'S WORDS HAD A STARTLING EFFECT ON DUVAL.

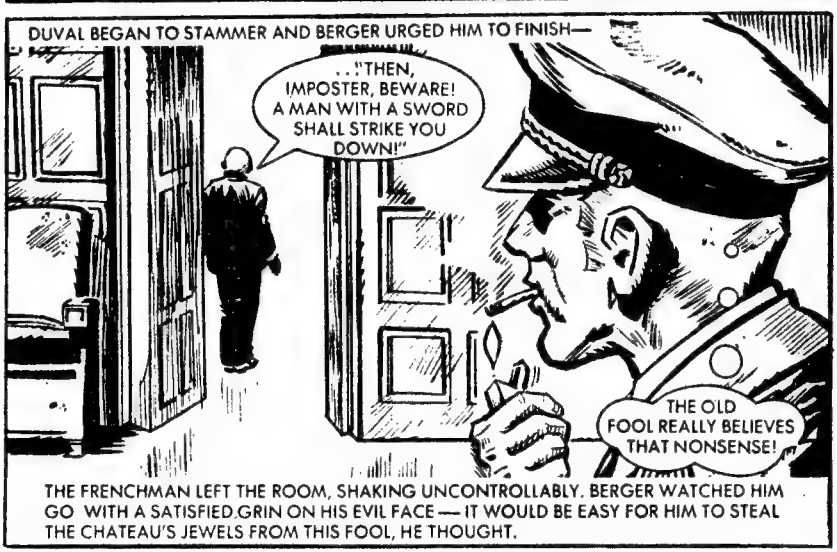
BROTHERS? — " WHEN THE BROTHERS ARE FORCED APART "— IT'S IN THE CURSE!

BERGER LAUGHED SCORNFULLY AT DUVAL'S SUDDEN FEAR AND PANIC.

YOU'RE A FINE ARISTOCRAT I MUST SAY! AFRAID OF SHADOWS AND NOW AFRAID OF STONES!

BUT THOSE ARE THE WORDS . . . THE WORDS FROM THE GUILLOTINE!


THE FAT FRENCHMAN STILL HAD THE VERY PARCHMENT ON WHICH THE CURSE HAD BEEN WRITTEN, AND HAVING READ IT SEVERAL TIMES HE KNEW THE LINES OFF BY HEART. BUT BERGER WAS CURIOUS AND NOW MADE DUVAL RECITE THE WHOLE CURSE.
" WHEN YOUR ANCESTOR IS DEVOURED BY A WOLF, WHEN THE BROTHERS ARE FORCED APART, WHEN A BIRD HANGS BY ITS FEET FROM A TREE, AND DIAMONDS FALL FROM THE AIR"...


DUVAL BEGAN TO STAMMER AND BERGER URGED HIM TO FINISH—
..."THEN, IMPOSTER, BEWARE! A MAN WITH A SWORD SHALL STRIKE YOU DOWN!"
THE OLD FOOL REALLY BELIEVES THAT NONSENSE!
THE FRENCHMAN LEFT THE ROOM, SHAKING UNCONTROLLABLY. BERGER WATCHED HIM GO WITH A SATISFIED GRIN ON HIS EVIL FACE — IT WOULD BE EASY FOR HIM TO STEAL THE CHATEAU'S JEWELS FROM THIS FOOL, HE THOUGHT.

MEANWHILE BOB AND MARCEL HAD BEEN IN TOUCH WITH LONDON BY RADIO FOR MORE EXPLOSIVES.

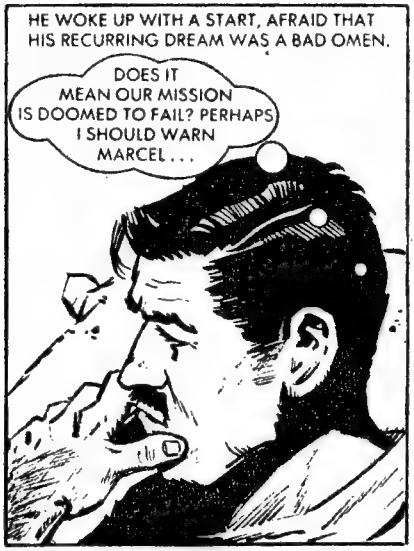
IT'S TO BE DROPPED TO THE CHERBONNE GROUP AGAIN — IT'S BETTER THAT WAY, BUT THEY'VE GOT A CURFEW OPERATING THERE NOW. WE'LL PROBABLY SOON HAVE ONE HERE TOO!

WE'LL FIND A WAY ROUND THAT PROBLEM. THE TRAIN'S DUE IN ONLY A FEW DAY'S TIME NOW . . .

THEY HAD JUST HEARD THE NEWS THAT PIERRE HAD BEEN LOCKED UP IN PRISON AND WERE DETERMINED TO MAKE HIS SACRIFICE WORTHWHILE.

BUT THAT NIGHT IN BED, BOB'S DREAM RETURNED. THIS TIME HOWEVER IT WAS CLEAR THAT HE WAS BEING PUSHED BY THE CROWD . . . TOWARDS THE GUILLOTINE.

THE GUILLOTINE! THEY'RE PUSHING ME TOWARDS THE GUILLOTINE!


HE WOKE UP WITH A START, AFRAID THAT HIS RECURRING DREAM WAS A BAD OMEN.
DOES IT MEAN OUR MISSION IS DOOMED TO FAIL? PERHAPS I SHOULD WARN MARCEL . . .

BUT BY MORNING BOB'S COMMON SENSE HAD TAKEN OVER AND HE THOUGHT NO MORE OF THE DREAM.
IT WAS ONLY A DREAM . . . PROBABLY CAUSED BY WORRY. I WON'T BOTHER TO TELL MARCEL — HE'S GOT ENOUGH PROBLEMS AT THE MOMENT!

THEY RECEIVED WORD NEXT DAY THAT THEIR EXPLOSIVES HAD ARRIVED. MARCEL AND BOB WENT TO COLLECT IT, AND ON THEIR WAY BACK ON A LITTLE-USED TRACK IN THE CHATEAU GROUNDS —
I CAN HEAR SOLDIERS MARCHING! WE'VE BROKEN CURFEW, WE'LL HAVE TO HIDE.
INTO THE TREES — HURRY!

BOTH MEN WERE JUST IN TIME TO HIDE THEIR BIKES AND DIVE INTO COVER BEFORE THE GERMAN PATROL PASSED BY.
SO FAR, SO GOOD . . .

BOB CREPT AWAY FROM THE ROAD TO SCOUT AHEAD, LEAVING MARCEL TO FOLLOW WITH THEIR CYCLES. BUT SUDDENLY THE ENGLISH AGENT STOPPED AS HE HEARD A NOISE BEHIND HIM.
WHAT'S THAT . . .

HE TURNED ROUND TO SEE A FIGURE CROUCHED BEHIND A ROCK, AND TAKING NO CHANCES HE MOVED FORWARD SILENTLY AND SUDDENLY LEAPT ON THE STRANGER.
NOT SO FAST!
AAAAAH!

BOB GRAPPLED DESPERATELY WITH HIS VICTIM, THEN WAS STARTLED TO RECOGNISE THE FACE AS MARCEL RUSHED TO HIS AID.
ETIENNE! WHAT IN THE WORLD ARE YOU DOING HERE? YOU COULD HAVE GOT KILLED!
LET GO OF MY NECK. YOU'RE STRANGLING ME!
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT, BOB?

THE MAN BOB HAD JUMPED WAS OLD ETIENNE, ONE OF THEIR GROUP. HE EXPLAINED THAT HE HAD BEEN HAVING A QUIET NIGHT'S POACHING BEFORE BEING SO RUDELY INTERRUPTED.
SERVES YOU RIGHT ANYWAY FOR CREEPING AROUND LIKE THAT.
I DIDN'T EXPECT TO BE ATTACKED BY SOME MANIAC!

BUT THE COMMOTION HAD ALERTED THE GERMAN PATROL AND THEY SOON SPOTTED THE THREE RESISTANCE MEN.
SCHNELL! GET THEM!
THEY'VE SEEN US! GET OUT OF HERE — FAST!

THEY QUICKLY DISAPPEARED INTO THE TREES AS THE GERMANS SPREAD OUT IN PURSUIT.

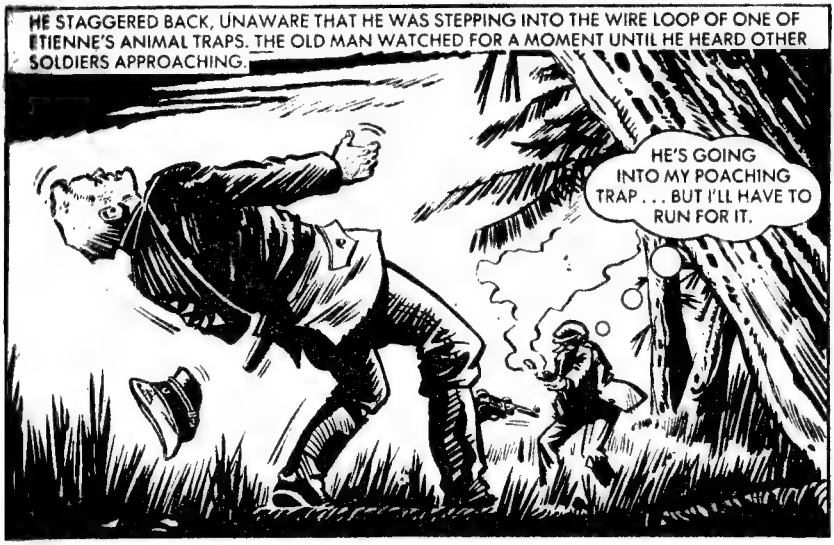
IF I CAN CATCH THOSE MEN IT'LL LOOK GOOD ON MY REPORT.

BOB AND MARCEL HAD NO TIME TO HELP OLD ETIENNE AND THE SLOWER MAN SOON LAGGED BEHIND, TO BE CAUGHT UP BY THE GERMAN OFFICER.

HEY, YOU . . . OLD MAN! HALT! . . !

IT LOOKED LIKE THE OLD MAN WOULD HAVE TO GIVE HIMSELF UP.

BUT THE GERMAN OFFICER RECEIVED A VERY NASTY SHOCK WHEN THE OLD POACHER SPUN ROUND AND BLASTED HIM WITH HIS SHOTGUN.
OLD MAN, INDEED! I'M NOT TOO OLD TO FIGHT BACK!
AAARGH!


HE STAGGERED BACK, UNAWARE THAT HE WAS STEPPING INTO THE WIRE LOOP OF ONE OF ETIENNE'S ANIMAL TRAPS. THE OLD MAN WATCHED FOR A MOMENT UNTIL HE HEARD OTHER SOLDIERS APPROACHING.
HE'S GOING INTO MY POACHING TRAP . . . BUT I'LL HAVE TO RUN FOR IT.

THE GERMAN TROOPS ARRIVED JUST AS ETIENNE WAS MAKING OFF INTO THE TREES, BUT THE SIGHT THEY MET SHOCKED THEM. THEIR OFFICER HAD SPRUNG THE POACHING TRAP AND HAD ALMOST BEEN LIFTED CLEAR OF THE GROUND, HIS FEET TIGHTLY BOUND IN THE WIRE.
IT'S THE HAUPTMANN. HE'S CAUGHT IN SOME KIND OF POACHER'S TRAP!
THERE GOES ONE OF THEM! LET'S GET AFTER HIM!
FURTHER AHEAD, BOB AND MARCEL SEEMED LOST IN THE VAST CHATEAU GROUNDS.
THE BOCHES ARE ALL ROUND US . . . AND WE'VE LOST ETIENNE. WE'LL NEVER GET OUT OF HERE!
YES WE WILL.

TO MARCEL'S SURPRISE HIS ENGLISH FRIEND SUDDENLY SEEMED TO KNOW EXACTLY WHICH WAY TO GO, AND HE LED THEM TO A HIGH WALL BORDERING PART OF THE CHATEAU GROUNDS.
THIS WAY —COME ON.
BUT I THOUGHT YOU SAID YOU DIDN'T KNOW THESE GROUNDS . . .

BOB SAID NOTHING, BUT AS HE HELPED MARCEL OVER THE WALL, IT STRUCK HIM THAT IT WAS VERY STRANGE HOW HE KNEW WHICH WAY TO GO, YET HAD NEVER BEEN HERE BEFORE.
BUT HOW DID I DO IT? IT FELT AS IF I'D BEEN THROUGH THE GROUNDS BEFORE . . .
FOR SOMEONE WHO DIDN'T KNOW HIS WAY YOU'VE MANAGED PRETTY WELL!
THEY REACHED THE VILLAGE OF LAURONNE SAFELY. BOB WAS STILL PUZZLED ABOUT THE INCIDENT, BUT HE COULD THINK OF NO EXPLANATION.

NEXT DAY NEWS OF THE GERMAN OFFICER'S DEATH REACHED BERGER. HE READ THE REPORT, THEN SMILED UNPLEASANTLY—

I SUPPOSE YOU HEARD THOSE SHOTS FIRED IN THE GROUNDS LAST NIGHT? DO YOU REALISE WHAT IT MEANS?

SOME BUNGLING OFFICER GOT HIMSELF SHOT BY A POACHER. IT DOESN'T CONCERN ME.

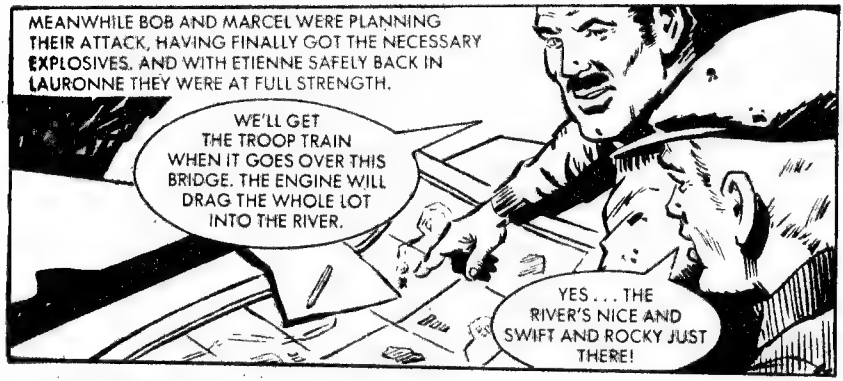
IT SHOULD DO! HE WAS FOUND HANGING UPSIDE DOWN IN A TREE! AND DO YOU KNOW WHAT HIS NAME WAS — VOGEL! THAT'S GERMAN FOR BIRD. ANOTHER LINE OF YOUR CURSE HAS COME TRUE!

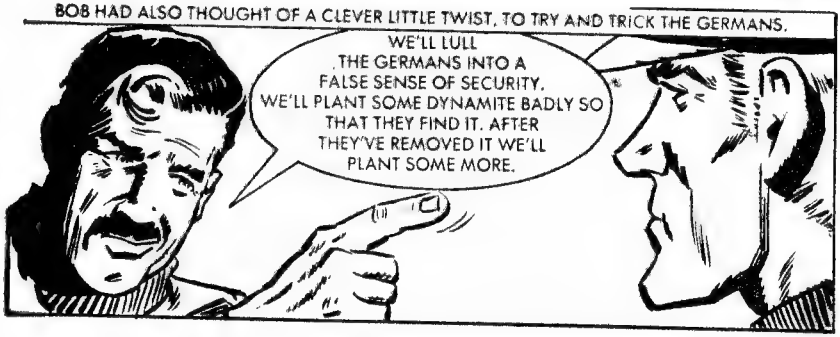
HE WAS RIGHT. THE LINE OF THE CURSE READ " WHEN A BIRD HANGS BY ITS FEET FROM A TREE " . . .

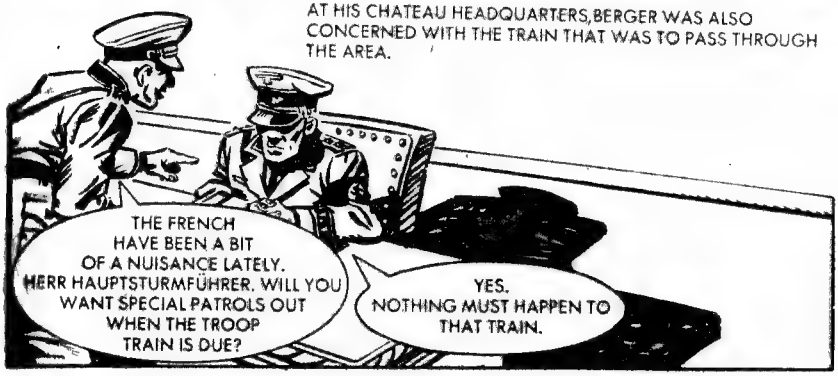
. . . AND BERTRAND DUVAL TURNED WHITE WITH FEAR AS HE REALISED WHAT THIS MEANT.

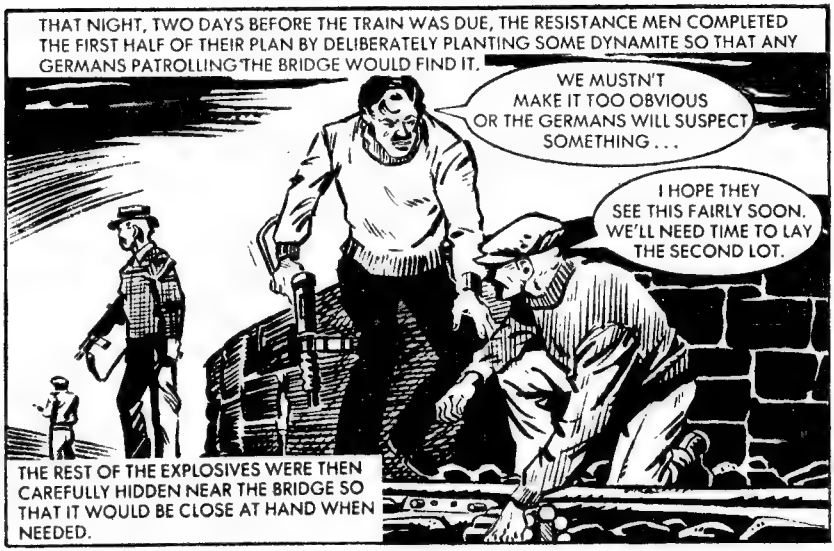
YOU'RE LAUGHING AT ME . . . BUT MY LIFE IS IN DANGER! YOU SHOULD DO SOMETHING TO HELP ME.

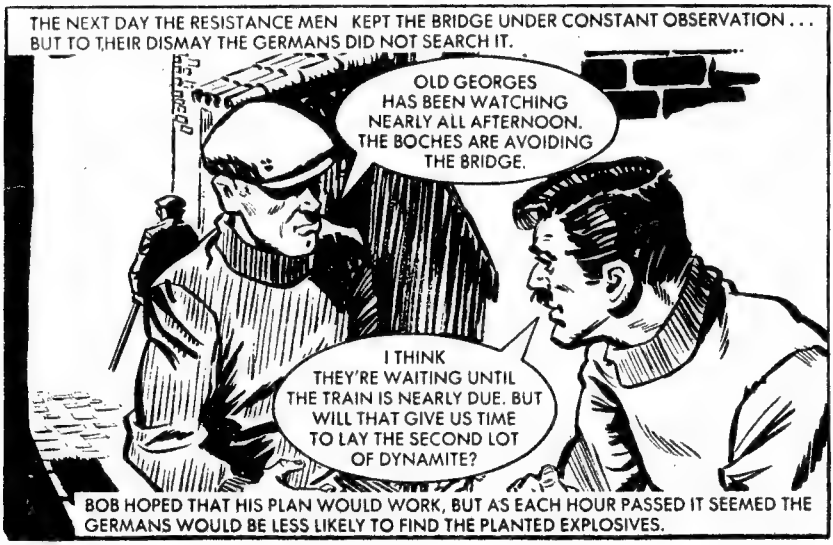
YOU SHOULD LAUGH TOO! THAT'S THE ONLY WAY TO TREAT YOUR SO-CALLED " CURSE." GROWN MEN DON'T BELIEVE IN SUCH THINGS!


MEANWHILE BOB AND MARCEL WERE PLANNING THEIR ATTACK, HAVING FINALLY GOT THE NECESSARY EXPLOSIVES. AND WITH ETIENNE SAFELY BACK IN LAURONNE THEY WERE AT FULL STRENGTH.
WE'LL GET THE TROOP TRAIN WHEN IT GOES OVER THIS BRIDGE. THE ENGINE WILL DRAG THE WHOLE LOT INTO THE RIVER.
YES . . . THE RIVER'S NICE AND SWIFT AND ROCKY JUST THERE!

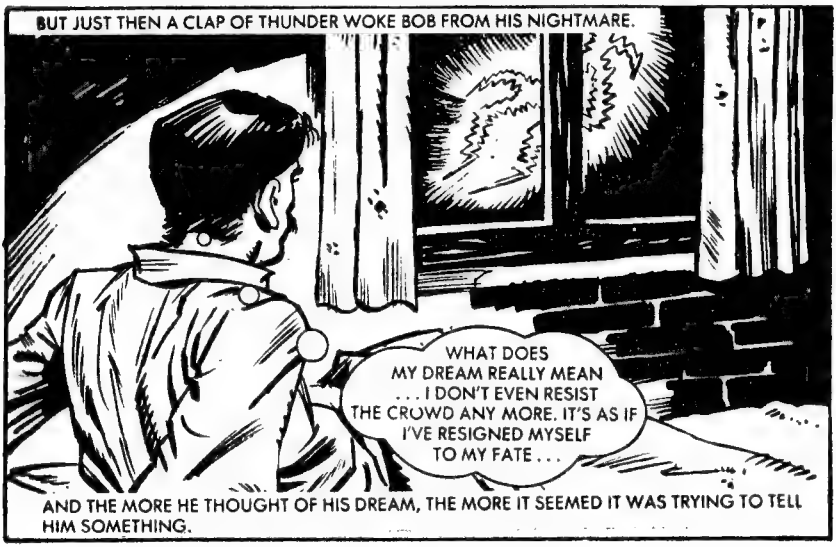

BOB HAD ALSO THOUGHT OF A CLEVER LITTLE TWIST, TO TRY AND TRICK THE GERMANS.
WE'LL LULL THE GERMANS INTO A FALSE SENSE OF SECURITY. WE'LL PLANT SOME DYNAMITE BADLY SO THAT THEY FIND IT. AFTER THEY'VE REMOVED IT WE'LL PLANT SOME MORE.


AT HIS CHATEAU HEADQUARTERS, BERGER WAS ALSO CONCERNED WITH THE TRAIN THAT WAS TO PASS THROUGH THE AREA.
THE FRENCH HAVE BEEN A BIT OF A NUISANCE LATELY. HERR HAUPTSTURMFÜHRER. WILL YOU WANT SPECIAL PATROLS OUT WHEN THE TROOP TRAIN IS DUE?
YES. NOTHING MUST HAPPEN TO THAT TRAIN.


THAT NIGHT, TWO DAYS BEFORE THE TRAIN WAS DUE, THE RESISTANCE MEN COMPLETED THE FIRST HALF OF THEIR PLAN BY DELIBERATELY PLANTING SOME DYNAMITE SO THAT ANY GERMANS PATROLLING THE BRIDGE WOULD FIND IT.
WE MUSTN'T MAKE IT TOO OBVIOUS OR THE GERMANS WILL SUSPECT SOMETHING . . .
I HOPE THEY SEE THIS FAIRLY SOON. WE'LL NEED TIME TO LAY THE SECOND LOT.
THE REST OF THE EXPLOSIVES WERE THEN CAREFULLY HIDDEN NEAR THE BRIDGE SO THAT IT WOULD BE CLOSE AT HAND WHEN NEEDED.


THE NEXT DAY THE RESISTANCE MEN KEPT THE BRIDGE UNDER CONSTANT OBSERVATION . . . BUT TO THEIR DISMAY THE GERMANS DID NOT SEARCH IT.
OLD GEORGES HAS BEEN WATCHING NEARLY ALL AFTERNOON. THE BOCHES ARE AVOIDING THE BRIDGE.
I THINK THEY'RE WAITING UNTIL THE TRAIN IS NEARLY DUE. BUT WILL THAT GIVE US TIME TO LAY THE SECOND LOT OF DYNAMITE?
BOB HOPED THAT HIS PLAN WOULD WORK, BUT AS EACH HOUR PASSED IT SEEMED THE GERMANS WOULD BE LESS LIKELY TO FIND THE PLANTED EXPLOSIVES.

THAT NIGHT BOB WENT TO SLEEP WITH A LOT ON HIS MIND, AND ONCE AGAIN THE STRANGE DREAM RETURNED.
THE STEPS . . . I MUST GO UP THE STEPS . . . TO THE GUILLOTINE . . .


BUT JUST THEN A CLAP OF THUNDER WOKE BOB FROM HIS NIGHTMARE.
WHAT DOES MY DREAM REALLY MEAN . . . I DON'T EVEN RESIST THE CROWD ANY MORE. IT'S AS IF I'VE RESIGNED MYSELF TO MY FATE . . .
AND THE MORE HE THOUGHT OF HIS DREAM, THE MORE IT SEEMED IT WAS TRYING TO TELL HIM SOMETHING.

AS BOB LOOKED OUT AT THE STORM, HE COULD NOT HELP BUT FEEL A SENSE OF FOREBODING.
BUT WHAT IS MY FATE? A GUILLOTINE CAN'T MEAN ANYTHING GOOD! DOES IT MEAN OUR MISSION IS GOING TO FAIL . . .
BOB WOULD DEARLY HAVE LIKED TO DISCUSS HIS DREAM WITH MARCEL — BUT HE DID NOT WANT TO WORRY HIS FRIEND AS WELL.

MEANWHILE IN THE CHATEAU, BERGER WAS ALSO HAVING HIS PROBLEMS—IN THE VERY DISTINCTIVE SHAPE OF A NERVOUS AND SCARED BERTRAND DUVAL.
I'VE HELPED YOU . . . NOW YOU'VE GOT TO HELP ME! MY LIFE'S IN DANGER! GIVE ME A BODYGUARD.
LOCK YOURSELF IN YOUR ROOM IF YOU'RE SCARED . . . BUT LEAVE ME ALONE! I'VE GOT WORK TO DO.

BUT SUDDENLY BERTRAND ROUNDED ANGRILY ON BERGER—
I'VE GOT FRIENDS IN THE NAZI PARTY, AND THEY'RE MORE POWERFUL THAN YOU! I'VE GOT INFLUENCE! IF YOU WON'T HELP ME, PERHAPS THEY WILL!

THIS WORRIED THE S.S. OFFICER. HE WOULD EITHER HAVE TO PLEASE DUVAL—OR GET RID OF HIM.
I KNOW HE'S BRIBED MY SUPERIORS WITH PAINTINGS AND ANTIQUES FROM THIS CHATEAU. HE COULD MAKE TROUBLE FOR ME . . . RUIN MY CAREER.

BUT AS BERGER WALKED DOWN THE WIDE STAIRCASE HE HAD A SUDDEN IDEA—
THE FOURTH LINE OF THE CURSE. I COULD MAKE IT COME TRUE! THAT WOULD SCARE HIM! MAYBE THEN HE'D LEAVE THE CHATEAU AND GO AND HIDE SOMEWHERE SAFER!
THE OFFICER WAS LOOKING AT THE ELABORATE DIAMOND CHANDELIER HANGING FROM THE HIGH CEILING.

THE FOURTH LINE OF THE CURSE READ " AND DIAMONDS FALL FROM THE AIR." THIS BERGER PLANNED TO DO, AND HE CAREFULLY MADE SOME ADJUSTMENTS TO THE CHANDELIER'S SAFETY-CHAIN LEVER.

I'VE ONLY GOT TO TOUCH THIS NOW AND THE CHANDELIER WILL COME CRASHING DOWN! IT'LL BE A VERY SPECTACULAR " FALL OF DIAMONDS FROM THE AIR!"

LATER, ON THE SAME STORMY NIGHT, BOB AND THE RESISTANCE MEN MADE THEIR WAY TOWARDS THE RAILWAY BRIDGE, ALL ARMED WITH RECENTLY ACQUIRED STEN GUNS.

WE'D BETTER TAKE CARE . . . THE BOCHES ARE OUT IN FULL FORCE.

WELL, IF THEY DON'T FIND OUR EXPLOSIVE BAIT IT'LL AT LEAST SAVE US THE TROUBLE OF LAYING THE SECOND LOT!

THEY WERE THERE TO WATCH THE BRIDGE UNTIL THE GERMAN TROOP TRAIN WAS DUE, AND THEN QUICKLY CONNECT UP THE DYNAMITE TO THE DETONATOR.

BUT AS THEY NEARED THE BRIDGE THEY SPOTTED A GERMAN PATROL, OBVIOUSLY SEARCHING FOR ANY PLANTED EXPLOSIVES.
THE S.S. ARE DOWN THERE . . . KEEP BACK.
I HOPE THEY FIND WHAT THEY'RE LOOKING FOR!

THE WORDS WERE HARDLY OUT OF HIS MOUTH WHEN THE GERMANS FOUND THE CARELESSLY-HIDDEN DYNAMITE.
THEY'VE PLANTED SOME EXPLOSIVES, HERR OBERSTURMFÜHRER.
WHAT AN AMATEUR EFFORT! EVEN THE ARMY COULD HAVE FOUND THAT!
EVERYTHING WAS GOING EXACTLY AS BOB HAD PLANNED . . .

. . . AND AFTER THE S.S. MEN HAD LEFT, THINKING THEY HAD PREVENTED A SABOTAGE EFFORT, BOB AND THE OTHERS MADE THEIR WAY CAREFULLY DOWN THE WET SLOPE TO PLANT A SECOND LOT OF DYNAMITE UNDER THE RAILWAY TRACKS.
TAKE CARE, IT'S SLIPPERY.
I HOPE OUR HIDDEN DYNAMITE'S STILL DRY.
IT SHOULD BE. WE WRAPPED IT UP WELL.

BUT THEN ONE OF THE RESISTANCE MEN STEPPED ON A LOOSE STONE AND BEGAN TO FALL.
AAAAH!
OH, NO!

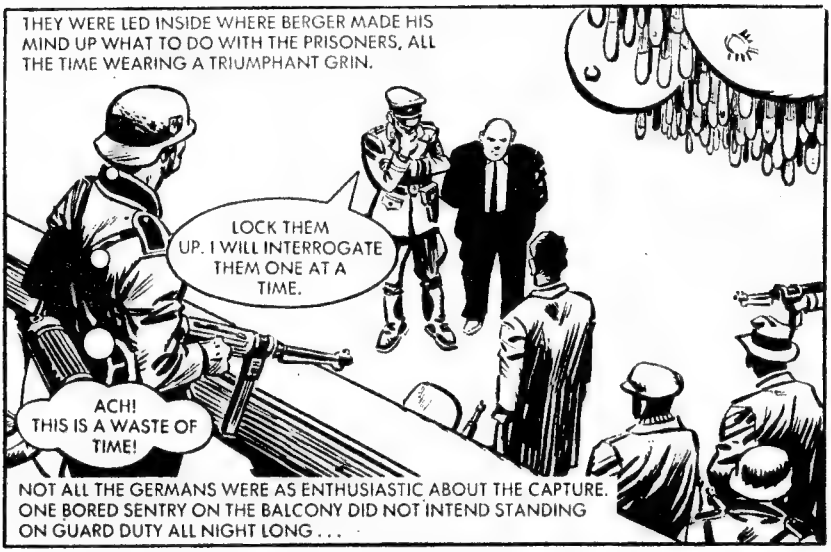
BOB AND THE OTHERS COULD ONLY WATCH HELPLESSLY AS THE MAN TUMBLED DOWN THE WET, MUDDY SLOPE, CAUSING SMALL ROCKS AND STONES TO CASCADE DOWN WITH HIM.
THE GROUND'S TOO SLIPPERY. HE CAN'T STOP HIMSELF . . .
I HOPE THOSE S.S. MEN ARE OUT OF EARSHOT!
HOWEVER, THE S.S. PATROL HAD HEARD THE NOISE AND RUSHING BACK,THEY SPOTTED THE FALLING RESISTANCE MAN.
LOOK . . . A FRENCH CIVILIAN!
AND THERE'S MORE OF THEM UP THERE. SPREAD OUT AND SURROUND THEM!

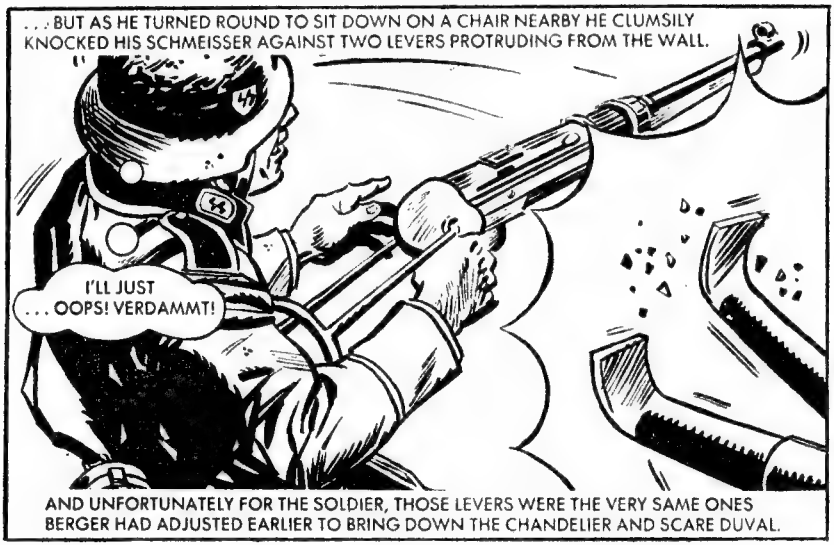
AS THE GERMANS DETERMINEDLY APPROACHED BOB REALISED HIS MEN WERE GREATLY OUTNUMBERED. HE ORDERED EVERYONE TO MAKE A RUN FOR IT.
SPLIT UP . . . AND NO HEROICS! WE MUST STAY FREE TO LAY THE SECOND LOT OF EXPLOSIVES!

BUT IT WAS NO USE. THE RESISTANCE MEN WERE SOON SURROUNDED AND GRIMLY BOB RESIGNED HIMSELF TO SURRENDER.
STAND STILL . . . OR YOU'LL NEVER MOVE AGAIN!
DROP YOUR GUN AND PUT YOUR HANDS UP NICE AND HIGH!

AS THEY WERE ROUNDED UP, BOB FELT THAT HIS STRANGE DREAM HAD, IN FACT, BEEN A WARNING.
IT LOOKS AS IF WE'VE FAILED. PERHAPS THAT'S WHAT MY NIGHTMARE MEANT! I SHOULD HAVE KNOWN THAT DREAMING ABOUT A GUILLOTINE WAS BAD LUCK!

BUT THE ENGLISH AGENT KNEW IT WAS NO USE PONDERING ON THIS SUBJECT AND BY THE TIME THEY REACHED THE CHATEAU FOR QUESTIONING HE DECIDED TO TRY AND FORGET IT.
THIS LOOKS LIKE THE END OF THE LINE . . .
KRAUS, SCHMIDT, BRAUN . . . FORM AN ESCORT FOR THE PRISONERS. THEY'RE GOING INSIDE FOR A NICE CHAT WITH HAUPTSTURM-FÜHRER BERGER!
HE KNEW THAT THE RESISTANCE FIGHTERS COULD EXPECT NO MERCY FROM THE S.S.


THEY WERE LED INSIDE WHERE BERGER MADE HIS MIND UP WHAT TO DO WITH THE PRISONERS, ALL THE TIME WEARING A TRIUMPHANT GRIN.
LOCK THEM UP. I WILL INTERROGATE THEM ONE AT A TIME.
ACH! THIS IS A WASTE OF TIME!
NOT ALL THE GERMANS WERE AS ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT THE CAPTURE. ONE BORED SENTRY ON THE BALCONY DID NOT INTEND STANDING ON GUARD DUTY ALL NIGHT LONG . . .


. . . BUT AS HE TURNED ROUND TO SIT DOWN ON A CHAIR NEARBY HE CLUMSILY KNOCKED HIS SCHMEISSER AGAINST TWO LEVERS PROTRUDING FROM THE WALL.
I'LL JUST . . . OOPS! VERDAMMT!
AND UNFORTUNATELY FOR THE SOLDIER, THOSE LEVERS WERE THE VERY SAME ONES BERGER HAD ADJUSTED EARLIER TO BRING DOWN THE CHANDELIER AND SCARE DUVAL.

BUT NOW THE CARELESS SOLDIER HAD SENT THE HUGE CLUSTER OF DIAMOND-CUT GLASS DOWN TOWARDS THE GERMANS AND RESISTANCE MEN BELOW.
LOOK OUT!
HIMMEL! THE CHANDELIER IS FALLING!

IT SMASHED TO THE GROUND IN A THOUSAND TINY SPLINTERS AS THE GERMANS DIVED OUT OF THE WAY JUST IN TIME.
NOW! RUN FOR IT!
ALERT AS EVER, BOB SAW THIS AS A CHANCE TO ESCAPE AND HIS MEN QUICKLY FOLLOWED HIM WHILE THEIR GERMAN GUARDS RECOVERED FROM THE SHOCK.

RUSHING OUTSIDE, BOB AND THE OTHERS DEALT EFFECTIVELY WITH ANY OPPONENTS IN THEIR PATH.

THAT'S FROM ENGLAND!

UUUUGH!

THEY RACED ON THROUGH THE CHATEAU GROUNDS AND BOB KNEW THEY STILL HAD A CHANCE TO COMPLETE THEIR MISSION.

WE MUST GET TO THE BRIDGE. THERE MIGHT STILL BE TIME TO BLOW THAT TRAIN.

I'LL COME WITH YOU. THE TWO OF US SHOULD MANAGE ALL RIGHT.

THE ENGLISH AGENT TOLD THE REST OF HIS GROUP TO MAKE FOR SAFETY. HE AND MARCEL WOULD BE ABLE TO LAY THE EXPLOSIVES BETWEEN THEM.

BACK AT THE CHATEAU, BERGER WAS FURIOUS—UNTIL ONE OF HIS OFFICERS PRODUCED THE DYNAMITE HE HAD FOUND ON THE BRIDGE.

WE'VE GOT THIS FROM THE BRIDGE, HERR HAUPTSTURMFÜHRER!

GOOD WORK. THEY CAN'T DO ANY MORE DAMAGE NOW.

JUST THEN DUVAL CAME IN, FRIGHTENED TO DEATH BY THE CRASHING CHANDELIER.

DIAMONDS FROM THE AIR . . . IT'S ALL COMING TRUE . . . I MUST ESCAPE . . . I MUST GET AWAY FROM HERE!

THE OLD FOOL'S CRACKING UP . . . I'LL SOON HAVE HIM OFF MY BACK. EVERYTHING'S GOING RIGHT FOR ME TONIGHT!

BERGER THOUGHT THAT WITH THE FRENCHMAN IN THIS STATE IT WOULD BE EASY FOR HIM TO TAKE THE CHATEAU'S JEWELS WHEN NECESSARY.

BUT THE S.S. OFFICER WOULD HAVE BEEN LESS THAN HAPPY IF HE COULD HAVE SEEN BOB AND MARCEL AT THAT MOMENT. FOR THEY HAD FOUND THE SECOND LOT OF DYNAMITE, BURIED NOT FAR FROM THE BRIDGE.

HERE'S THE DYNAMITE . . . AND STILL NICE AND DRY TOO! BUT WE'LL HAVE TO WORK QUICKLY.

I WONDER WHY THE JERRIES DIDN'T COME AFTER US? THEY MUST THINK WE'LL BE TOO SCARED TO TRY ANYTHING ELSE.

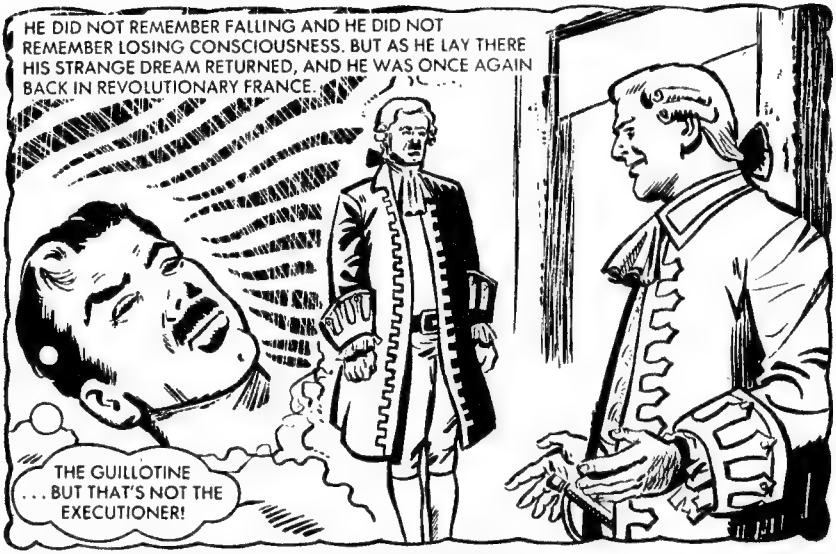
MEANWHILE BERGER WAS ABOUT TO DISCOVER SOME BAD NEWS AS HE MADE HIS WAY CHEERFULLY TO HIS ROOM.

THAT FRENCH SCHWEIN IS OUT IN THE GROUNDS, HERR HAUPT-STURMFÜHRER. I CHALLENGED HIM, BUT HE HAS A GUN, AND HE'S CARRYING A SMALL STRONG-BOX.

BERGER KNEW EXACTLY WHAT HE MEANT. HIS EXPRESSION CHANGED SUDDENLY.

HE'S MADE A RUN FOR IT, ALL RIGHT . . . BUT HE'S TAKEN THE DE LAURONNE JEWELLERY WITH HIM! I'VE GOT TO GET IT BACK— THAT WEALTH COULD BUY ME SAFETY OR PROMOTION IN THE FUTURE.

THE OFFICER DIDN'T WASTE ANY TIME. HE SOON FOUND OUT WHICH WAY DUVAL HAD GONE AFTER QUICKLY FETCHING HIS GREATCOAT.
HE WAS HEADING TOWARDS THE RAILWAY BRIDGE. HE TOOK A SHOT AT ME BUT MISSED!
I'LL BRING HIM BACK.
AS BERGER SET OFF AFTER DUVAL HE WAS WORKING IT ALL OUT.
I'LL CLAIM I SHOT HIM IN SELF-DEFENCE . . . I'LL GET RID OF HIM AND GET THE JEWELLERY BACK IN ONE GO!
AT THAT MOMENT, BOB AND MARCEL WERE MAKING THEIR WAY TOWARDS THE BRIDGE TO PLANT THE EXPLOSIVES. BUT AS THEY CROSSED OVER THE WET, SLIPPERY ROCKS THE ENGLISHMAN LOST HIS FOOTING.
AAAH!
BOB!
BOB FELL, CRACKING HIS HEAD AGAINST THE SHARP ROCK, KNOCKING HIMSELF COLD.


HE DID NOT REMEMBER FALLING AND HE DID NOT REMEMBER LOSING CONSCIOUSNESS. BUT AS HE LAY THERE HIS STRANGE DREAM RETURNED, AND HE WAS ONCE AGAIN BACK IN REVOLUTIONARY FRANCE.
THE GUILLOTINE . . . BUT THAT'S NOT THE EXECUTIONER!

THIS WAS THE CLIMAX TO BOB'S DREAM—BUT INSTEAD OF ENDING IN DEATH, AS HE HAD IMAGINED, A MAN STEPPED FORWARD TO HAND HIM A SWORD. AND THE MAN WAS NONE OTHER THAN THE MARQUIS DE RICHMONDE MARCEL HAD TOLD HIM ABOUT.
TAKE IT, MONSIEUR! I HAVE BEEN WAITING A LONG TIME TO GIVE IT TO YOU!

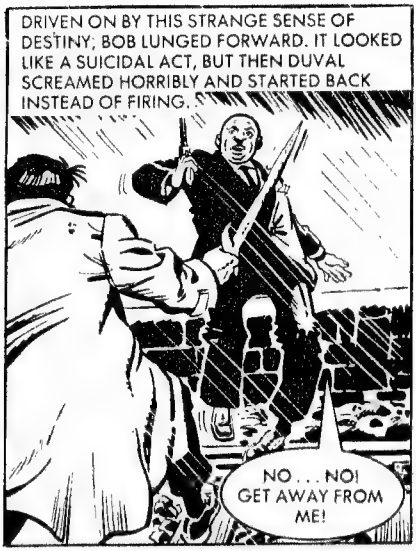
OPENING HIS EYES JUST THEN, BOB WAS AMAZED TO FIND HE WAS GRIPPING A PIECE OF DRIFTWOOD, SHAPED VERY MUCH LIKE THE SWORD IN HIS DREAM.
ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? WHAT HAPPENED? WHY ARE YOU HANGING ONTO THAT STICK . . .
A STICK? BUT I THOUGHT . . .

SUDDENLY A STRANGE FEELING CAME OVER HIM. HE SEEMED TO KNOW THAT HIS MISSION COULD NOT FAIL.
A STICK'S AS GOOD AS A SWORD! COME ON . . . WE'VE GOT A BRIDGE TO BLOW!
AS LONG AS YOU'RE ALL RIGHT. YOU WERE OUT COLD FOR A MOMENT THERE.
MARCEL WAS PUZZLED BY THE WAY BOB HELD ONTO THE SWORD-SHAPED STICK, BUT HE SAID NOTHING MORE OF IT AND THEY BOTH HURRIED ON TOWARDS THE BRIDGE.

AS SOON AS THEY REACHED IT THEY WORKED FAST TO PLANT THE EXPLOSIVES AND SET THE FUSE. THEN, OUT OF THE DARKNESS CAME A LARGE FIGURE—IT WAS DUVAL.
THAT'S IT. WE'VE CUT IT FINE; BUT WE'VE MADE IT. NOW LET'S GET AWAY FROM HERE.
WHO'S THAT? SOMEONE'S COMING THIS WAY . . .

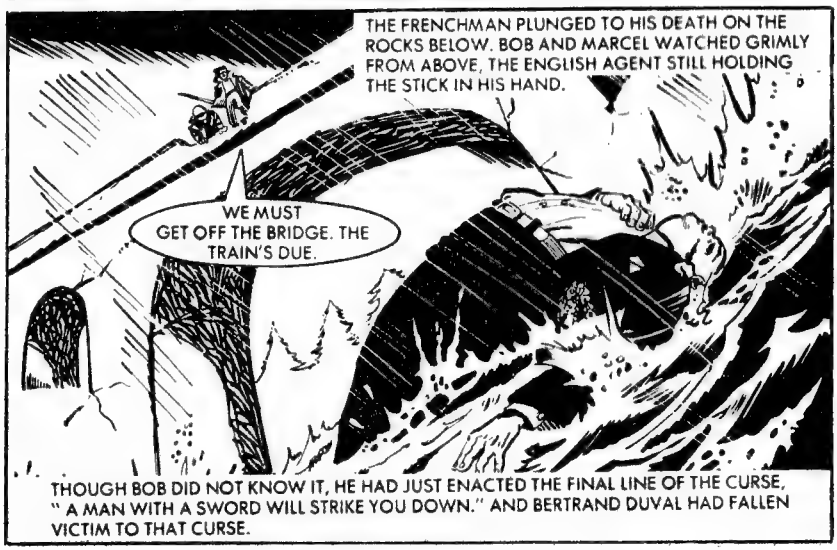
THE FRENCHMAN APPROACHED, ARMED WITH A PISTOL AND WITH THE JEWELLERY DANGLING FROM HIS POCKETS. BOB AND MARCEL STARED AT HIM IN AMAZEMENT.
IT'S THE " COMTE "!
I'LL KILL YOU! NO ONE'S GOING TO STOP ME NOW . . . I MUST GET AWAY!
DUVAL WAS HALF-CRAZED, AND WAS ABOUT TO SHOOT THE TWO MEN.

THEN SUDDENLY, ALMOST AS IF POSSESSED, BOB SNATCHED UP HIS " SWORD." .
I'LL KILL YOU BOTH!
NOT IF I CAN HELP IT!


DRIVEN ON BY THIS STRANGE SENSE OF DESTINY; BOB LUNGED FORWARD. IT LOOKED LIKE A SUICIDAL ACT, BUT THEN DUVAL SCREAMED HORRIBLY AND STARTED BACK INSTEAD OF FIRING.
NO . . . NO! GET AWAY FROM ME!

THE FAT FRENCHMAN WAS NOT AFRAID OF BOB BUT OF WHAT HE WAS IMAGINING. THE WORDS OF THE CURSE FIRMLY IMPLANTED ON HIS MIND, HE THOUGHT HE COULD SEE A MAN FROM THE PAST, STRIKING OUT AT HIM WITH HIS SWORD.
GET BACK! KEEP AWAY!

OVERCOME BY FEAR, DUVAL STAGGERED BACK, EVEN THOUGH THE STICK HADN'T TOUCHED HIM. HE FELL AS A WEAKENED, CRUMBLING SECTION OF THE BRIDGE COLLAPSED UNDER HIS WEIGHT.
AAARGH!


THE FRENCHMAN PLUNGED TO HIS DEATH ON THE ROCKS BELOW. BOB AND MARCEL WATCHED GRIMLY FROM ABOVE, THE ENGLISH AGENT STILL HOLDING THE STICK IN HIS HAND.
WE MUST GET OFF THE BRIDGE. THE TRAIN'S DUE.
THOUGH BOB DID NOT KNOW IT, HE HAD JUST ENACTED THE FINAL LINE OF THE CURSE, " A MAN WITH A SWORD WILL STRIKE YOU DOWN." AND BERTRAND DUVAL HAD FALLEN VICTIM TO THAT CURSE.

MEANTIME, UNAWARE OF THE INCREDIBLE HAPPENINGS, BERGER WAS STILL LOOKING FOR DUVAL AND THE JEWELLERY. BOB AND MARCEL SAW HIM JUST IN TIME—

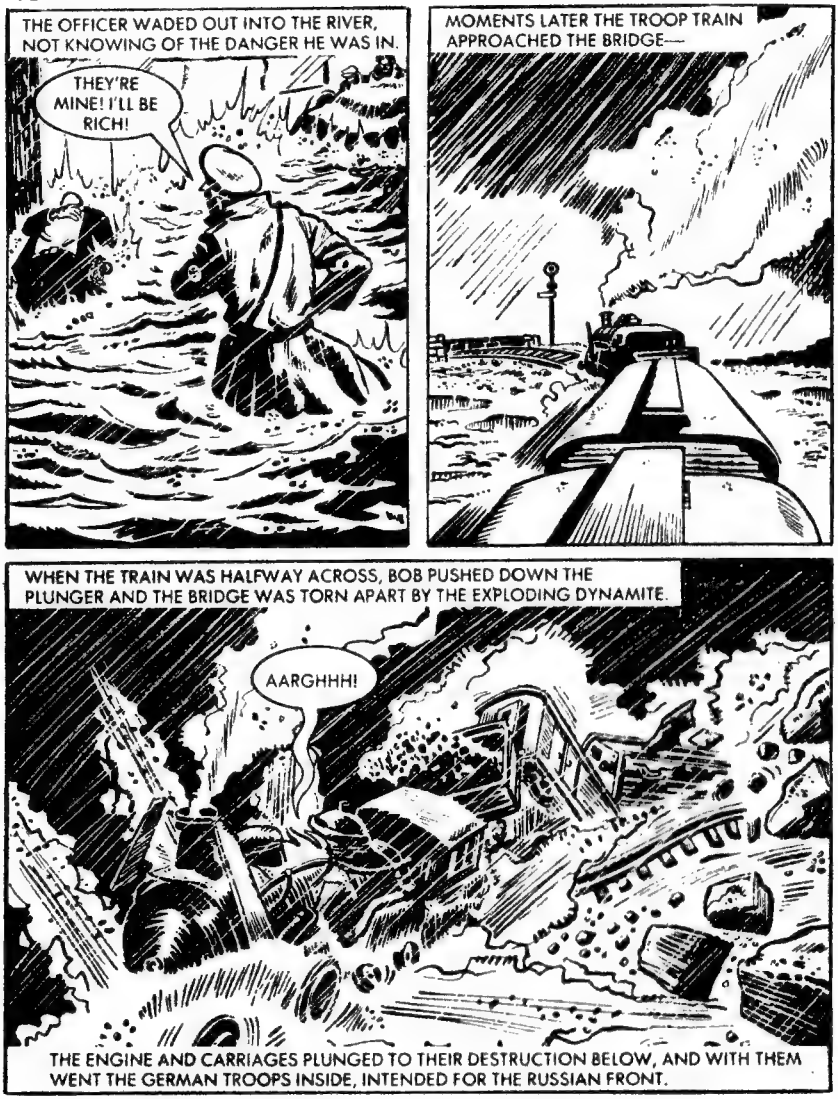
LOOK . . . OVER THERE. AN S.S. MAN . . . AND HE'S COMING THIS WAY.

ONLY ONE? THAT'S UNUSUAL . . .

EASILY AVOIDING DETECTION, THEY HURRIED TO MAN THE DETONATOR, FOR ALREADY THEY COULD HEAR THE TRAIN IN THE DISTANCE.

BERGER HAD HEARD A FAINT SCREAM MINUTES EARLIER AND WHEN HE SAW THE FRENCHMAN'S BODY HE THOUGHT HE KNEW WHAT HAD HAPPENED.

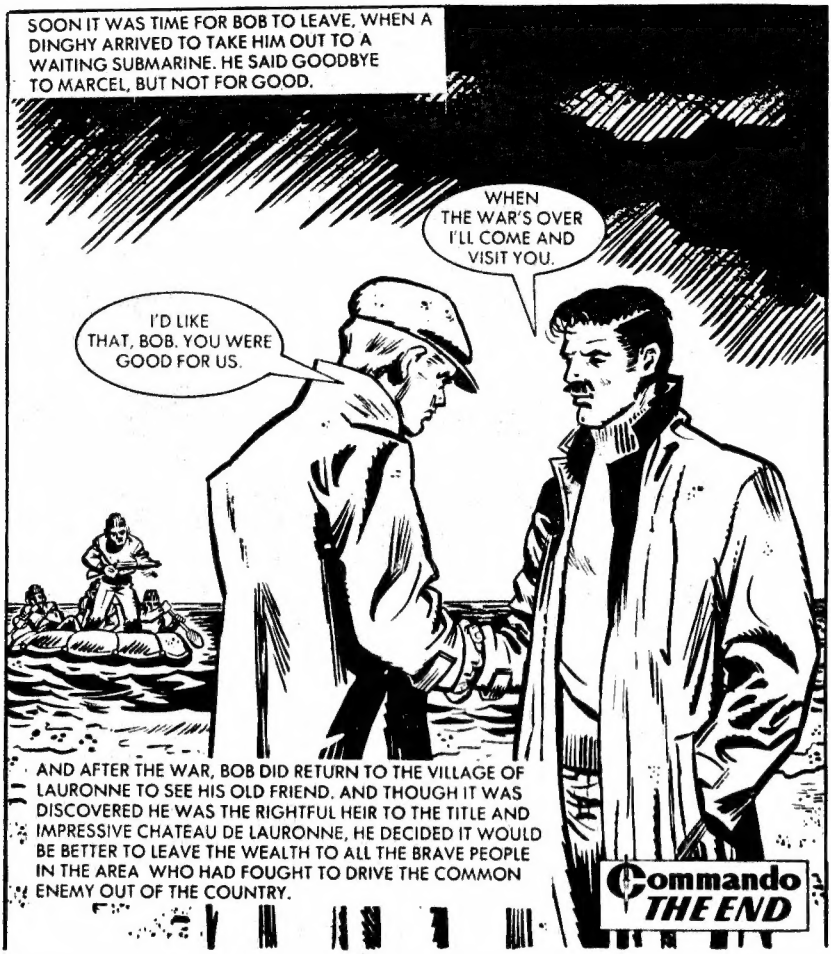
THE OLD FOOL MISSED HIS FOOTING . . . I WON'T EVEN HAVE TO SHOOT HIM NOW! BUT HE'S STILL GOT THE JEWELLERY ON HIM . . .


THE OFFICER WADED OUT INTO THE RIVER, NOT KNOWING OF THE DANGER HE WAS IN.
THEY'RE MINE! I'LL BE RICH!
MOMENTS LATER THE TROOP TRAIN APPROACHED THE BRIDGE—
WHEN THE TRAIN WAS HALFWAY ACROSS, BOB PUSHED DOWN THE PLUNGER AND THE BRIDGE WAS TORN APART BY THE EXPLODING DYNAMITE.
AARGHHH!
THE ENGINE AND CARRIAGES PLUNGED TO THEIR DESTRUCTION BELOW, AND WITH THEM WENT THE GERMAN TROOPS INSIDE, INTENDED FOR THE RUSSIAN FRONT.

FOR BERGER IT WAS TOO LATE TO SAVE HIMSELF. HE REALISED WITH HORROR THAT HE WAS DOOMED AS THE BRIDGE AND TRAIN CRASHED DOWN ON TOP OF HIM.
AAAARGH!

BOB AND MARCEL WATCHED WITH SATISFACTION. FOR THEM IT HAD BEEN A PARTICULARLY REWARDING NIGHT'S WORK.
MISSION COMPLETED. I THINK!
YES . . . COMPLETED!

BOB, HAVING ACHIEVED WHAT HE HAD SET OUT TO DO, WAS TO RETURN TO ENGLAND AS MARCEL COULD NOW LEAD THE RESISTANCE GROUP. BUT FATE HAD ONE MORE SURPRISE FOR BOB, WHEN HE TOLD HIS FRIEND MORE ABOUT HIMSELF WHILE THEY WAITED ON A DESERTED BEACH FOR THE AGENT'S PICK-UP.



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